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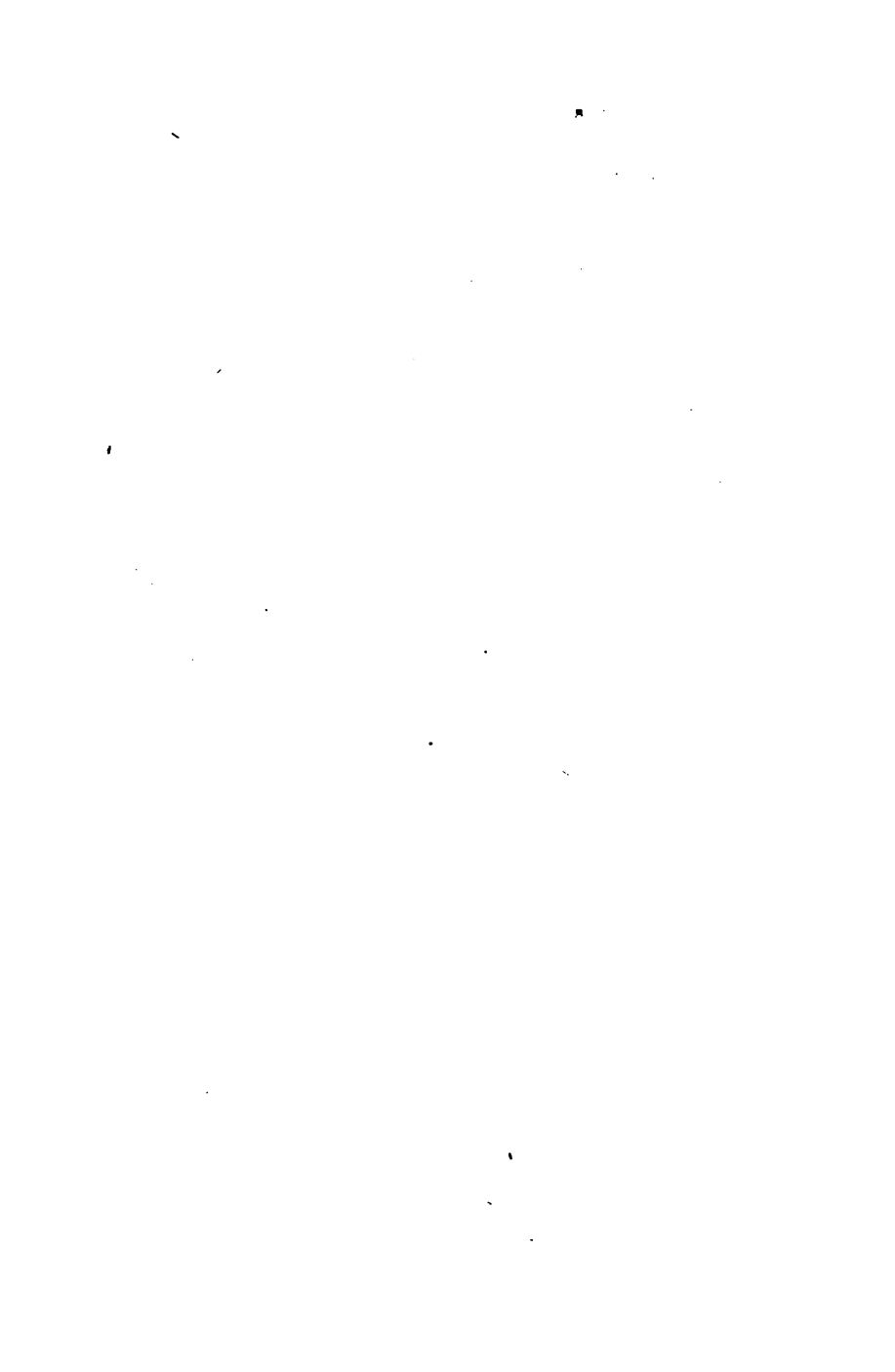
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○

A COURSE
OF
ENGLISH READING,

ADAPTED TO

Every Taste and Capacity.

BY THE

REV. JAMES PYCROFT, B. A.,

TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD.

Edited with Alterations, Emendations and Additions,

BY

J. A. SPENCER, D. D.,

AUTHOR OF "HISTORY OF REFORMATION IN ENGLAND," EDITOR OF "THE NEW
TESTAMENT IN GREEK, WITH NOTES ON THE HISTORICAL
BOOKS," ETC., ETC.

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TO

JOHN W. FRANCIS, M.D., LL. D.,

FELLOW OF THE MEDICAL AND CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON,
LATE PRESIDENT OF THE NEW YORK ACADEMY
OF MEDICINE, ETC.,

THE ABLE AND ACCOMPLISHED PHYSICIAN,

THE UNTIRING PHILANTHROPIST,

AND THE DEVOTED FRIEND OF LITERATURE AND SCIENCE,

THIS

Unpretending Volume

IS

VERY SINCERELY AND VERY

GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED BY

THE EDITOR.



. P R E F A C E .

IN acceding to the request of his friends the publishers, to edit the excellent manual of Mr. Pycroft, the American Editor begs leave briefly to state what he has attempted to do, in order to render it more worthy of the attention and confidence of the reader and students in general.

Mr. Pycroft's book, on its first appearance, proved highly acceptable to those who love the literature of our noble language, and the favorable estimate that was formed of it by the public was evident from the fact that an edition was rapidly disposed of. ' The vivacity of style of Mr. Pycroft's volume, his sterling common-sense way of treating his subject, his familiar but pertinent illustrations, and his effective

appeals and encouragements to his readers to use their time and labor to good purpose, showed clearly that he was both an experienced instructor and a judicious guide; and although the Editor could not but see that a number of things in the volume was open to criticism, and that the author's judgment, to say the least, was far from infallible, yet, at the same time, he was persuaded, that hardly any one fond of reading, or desirous of improvement, could take up the volume without becoming interested in it, and being induced to adopt some of its valuable practical suggestions. Recently a second edition has been issued in England, and several improvements have been made by the author in his work. This edition is the basis of what is now presented to the public.

The most marked defect in Mr. Pycroft's book, and one which would seriously interfere with its use in America, is its almost entirely ignoring our country, our history, institutions, authors, &c. To an American this is a matter of material moment, and one which could not be passed over in silence. It became necessary, therefore, for the Editor to endeavor to supply

this deficiency by various additions and emendations, which should adapt the volume, in a measure, at least, to the wants of our countrymen, and assist them in the effort to attain sound and correct knowledge of the history and position of the United States, and of the present state and condition of literature and science in our midst. This he has done, as well as he was able, in the intervals of a spare hour or two from his daily avocations; he has not scrupled in every part of the volume to use a free hand in making such alterations, omissions, additions, and the like, as deemed needful in his judgment; and as it has been a labor of love with him, he ventures to claim that he has essentially improved the work of Mr. Pycroft, for use more especially in America. He does not pretend that it is perfect, or that it covers all the ground which the reader might expect that it should. He does not imagine that in the lists of books on special subjects, any thing like fullness or completeness has been attained; yet, although sensible of the imperfections of the volume, he is clear in the conviction that it will serve a good

purpose in the community of our day, when the utilitarian tendency is so powerful in all directions, and the increase of trashy, worthless literature is so alarming to the philanthropist and the Christian.

Let then the young men and the young women of our country, resolve upon reading and studying such things as will benefit them every way, mentally and morally. Let them read good books, standard books, on history, natural science, general literature, religion, &c.; and be sure they will find their account in it, in the saving of time, in the strengthening the intellect, in the cultivation of the moral perceptions, in the fitting them for useful and happy lives, while it shall please God to spare them to their country and friends, and in enabling them to prepare for an unending existence of peace and joy in the world to come.

J. A. S.

NEW YORK, *February 22d*, 1854.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND ENGLISH EDITION

MISS JANE C. divided her in-door hours into three parts: the housekeeping and dinner-ordering cares of life claimed one part; hearing two younger sisters say their lessons a second part; and during the third and most delightful remainder she would lock her chamber door, and move on the marker of Russell's "Modern Europe" at the rate of never less than fifteen pages an hour, and sometimes more.

Being so vexatious as to ask wherein her satisfaction consisted, I was told—in the thought that she did her duty; that she kept her resolution; that she read as much as her friends; that continually fewer histories remained to read; and that she hoped one day to excel in literature.

A few torturing questions elicited that neither the labor nor the resolution aforesaid had produced any sensible increase, or more than a vague but anxious expectation, of available information or mental improvement. A painful suspicion arose that there

was some truth in the annoying remark of a certain idle companion, that she was "stupefying her brains for no good."

The exposure of an innocent delusion is mere cruelty, unless you replace the shadow by the substance; so a list of books and plan of operations was promised by the next post. Adam Smith attempted in a pamphlet what resulted in his "Wealth of Nations" after the labor of thirty years. My letter grew into a volume, now offered for the guidance of youth in each and every department of literature.

A large edition has been circulated, and a demand for a second enables me to notice many recent publications, and to profit by the suggestions of "gentle readers" and severer critics. In reply to repeated inquiries how the Author could have forgotten such and such works of undoubted authority, he replies, that no student would thank him for transcribing the Catalogue of the Bodleian, however much it might add to his reputation for extensive reading. Without aspiring to direct the future studies of Mr. Macaulay in History, of Dr. Buckland in Geology, or of the Duke of Wellington in Military Tactics, he is happy to say, that very learned men have expressed their regret that in their early studies they had not the benefit of such simple guidance as this volume affords.

J. P.

BARNSTAPLE, 1850.

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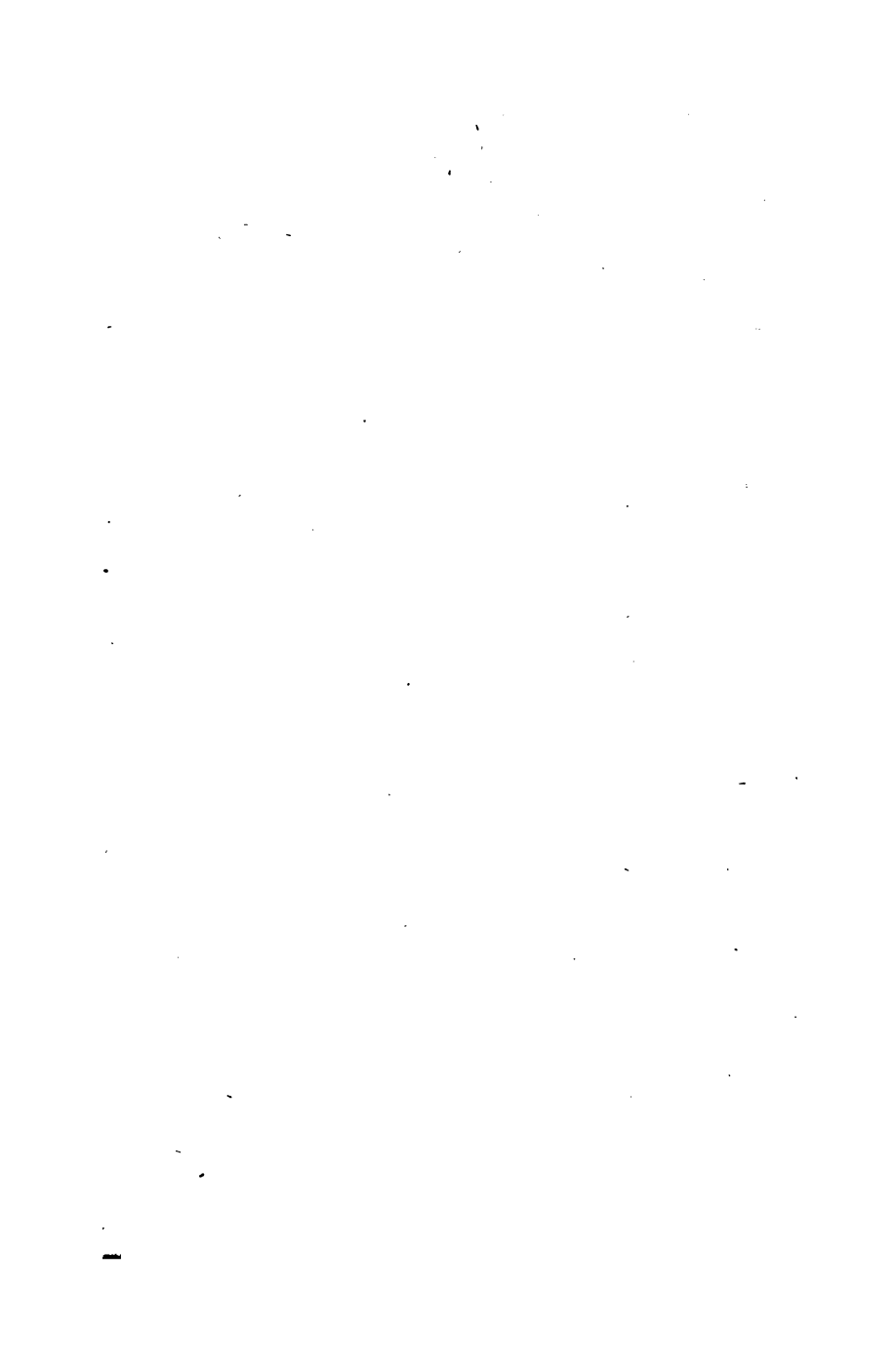
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A COURSE
OF
ENGLISH READING.

PART I.

**IN WHICH THE PATH OF LEARNING IS EXPLAINED TO BE
NICELY SLOPED AND GRADUATED, AND SO PLENTEOUSLY
STREWN WITH OBJECTS OF INTEREST AND CURIOSITY, AS
TO BE ENTERTAINING AND INVITING TO ALL.**



CHAPTER I.

THE KIND OF WORK TO BE DONE.

ALL the world would allow that a traveller would pass more easily from any one point to any other point by having a distinct picture of the road before he started. All the world would approve of a traveller's stopping once or twice in his journey, and asking himself, "To what place am I going?" and "Is this the best way to reach it?" But how many myriads in this world aforesaid do set out on the long and intricate road of life without a map, and, while they can only keep moving, never stop to ask whether they are in their latitude or out of it. So blindly do men run after all the imaginary prizes of life, and just as blindly do they pursue any one of them.

Consider intellectual pursuits. Many a young person has said to me, "I should so like to possess general information, and to be well-informed, like our very amusing friend. Is it not strange that, amidst all the toils of a most

engrossing profession, he can find time to acquire so much knowledge on every subject?"

"Not at all strange; a few minutes a day, well employed, are quite enough."

"Really I do not find it so. What I read rarely interests me; so I forget nearly as fast as I read, and grow more and more confused."

"Too little interest, and too much confusion! Indeed you have enough to complain of. Do you know that this may constitute all the difference between your acquirements and those of our friend?"

"But he is so clever."

"Can he do as much in one hour as you in six?"

"No! certainly not.—I see,—You are going to say to me I have more than six times the number of hours to study."

"Is there no one subject on which you feel yourself his equal? Think of gardening, drawing, scriptural reading, &c."

"True, but I am so fond of these subjects; that ——"

"Just what I was going to remind you,—your attention never flags, and your memory never fails."

"Exactly so. But I am not so fond of certain other subjects, which still I very much wish to know more about."

"But do you not remember a time when you were not so *fond* even of these favorite subjects?"

"Certainly; what would you infer from that?"

"I would infer what I positively have experienced both in myself and others, that a *fondness and interest for study may be acquired, and under good guidance it is hardly ever too late to begin.*"

"And the advice you intend to give me is founded on what?"

"On certain simple and self-evident means of creating an interest in all we read, and thus insuring attention, and consequently memory. Suppose you wished to nourish a man's body, you would say, 'Feed him.' 'But he does not digest.' 'Probably he has no appetite?' 'Yes; he will eat some few things.' 'Then choose these few; attend to his appetite, and by that judge when and what he can digest.' So with the mind; attend to the curiosity, which is the appetite of the mind, for whatever the mind receives with avidity tends to its maturity and strength."

In this way I have generally reasoned with many of my friends: and have had the satisfaction of seeing my advice attended with more success than I could ever anticipate. One pupil in particular is now present to my mind, a lady

—a circumstance most encouraging to all who distrust their own abilities—and this especially is the case which induces me to think that the same advice may be generally useful. My prescriptions, I trust, are not like the panacea of the day, the same for all patients in all stages; but such as, being based on the same principles of mental health, are nicely modified to suit every age and constitution. If my rules seem obvious, and what all well-educated persons may be presumed to know, I answer, Do we not often hear readers say, I like a book that begins at the beginning of a subject—that presumes not that I have knowledge, but that I am generally ignorant? Have the best informed never searched for information, though with affected indifference—they would not, on any account, be seen to do so—even in a child's story-book, or penny catechism? Hesiod, as quoted by Aristotle, divides the world into three classes:—the first have sense of their own and use it; the second use the sense of their neighbors; the third do neither one nor the other. Now all the advice I have to offer is addressed to the second class, with a slight hope and a sincere desire to make converts of the third.

As to arrangement, I will not promise to be very exact. As a traveller in the boundless fields of literature, I shall take the privilege of

describing fair flowers and curiosities as they occurred to me, and to quote the very words of many fellow-travellers, some pointing out my way, and some asking theirs. Full well I know that a man who will stand forth like a witness in a court of justice, and say not what he thinks, but what he knows and has seen, and sometimes what impression these occurrences produced upon his mind, may find his humble testimony decide knotty questions and promote high purposes he knew not of. Thus, by truth copied from the plain tablets of memory, will I endeavor so to lay down the law that each may solve his own perplexity, and to hold up a mirror in which every man may see himself.

The first case that occurs to me—the case of nearly all who have the ambition, but not the method, to be literary characters—is the following:—A young lady of great intelligence asked, “What would you recommend me to read?”

“That depends on what you have been reading lately—the new matter must assimilate with the old, or it will not digest.”

“I have read nearly all Hume and Smollett, and I want to know some more of the History of England, and the continental nations too—shall I read Russell’s *Modern Europe*?”

“Excuse me for saying you have rather a

large ground-plan for your historical edifice. Do you hope to build up in the same proportion? Remember the Tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues. A dozen and a half of thick volumes! Can you remember all this?"

"Oh no. The worst of it is I cannot remember even common facts, succession of kings, wars and peace, and the like, which even children learn from their little books. I was so long over Hume, that I forgot the first part before I had read the last."

"And if you had only read the child's history through twice, you would possess more real knowledge at the present moment."

This was allowed: my pupil also agreed that Hume dwelt too long on some topics in which she felt no interest, and too little on others; that with all long histories it was difficult to grasp the outline of events so comprehensively as to enjoy the advantage of comparing one period with another, and that in proportion as these defects caused less interest, greater perseverance was required. An admission which called to mind the expression of another literary pilgrim, who exclaimed from the very slough of despair, "What am I to try next—I have waded through two volumes of Russell, and am heartily tired by a third?"

I now took a sheet of paper and drew what

was intended for an historical tree. The trunk bore in straggling capitals the words Hume and Smollett; and in smaller letters the names of the sovereigns, each of whom was allowed a space commensurate with his reign. "Here," I said, "you have one continuous history, as it were, the stem and prop, or the connected chain of your knowledge:—a less substantial supporter than Hume would do as well at present, because you seem to have forgotten (which is about the same thing as never having read) Hume's History. I wish you to have a comprehensive knowledge of this whole chain; so take the History of England by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, one small duodecimo of 140 pages.* This you may know thoroughly in four or five days; and afterwards keep it in mind by writing out the answers of the questions given at the end. In this way your chain of history will be connected, and you may learn to run over in your mind all the events from Queen Boadicea to Queen Victoria, at least I have known children of ten years of age do as much."

"Then what shall I do with Hume?"

* This outline history not being easily obtained by the American student, he can substitute Mrs. Markham's History of England, or Keightley's Elementary History of England.—AM. ED.

"Hume's history will strengthen particular links in this fine chain I am supposing: it will make the imaginary trunk the thicker and better able to support the weight of its branches. You will guess that by the branches and offshoots I mean biographies and other works read in connection; the desire for which will be excited by this chain of reading, or grow out of this tree of history."

"A little more explanation if you please, and remember the amusement you promised me;—hitherto, my studies have been literally 'bubble, bubble, toil and trouble.'"

"Tell me, first, what *desire* or curiosity has *grown out of* your chain of reading?"

"Well, I have just now a curiosity to know more of Ridley, Cranmer, and those glorious martyrs."

"First cast your eye over the three or four pages of Mary's reign in the little history, you will then have a vivid recollection of their times; and then read a separate account of these champions of Christendom in some other books."

"Just so; but then I must go through four or five volumes of the Reformation?"

"There is no necessity; continue to read about the martyrs as long as your curiosity lasts. You may find a short mention of them

in a Cyclopædia or Biographical Dictionary; or you may turn to a full and graphic account in Southey's *Book of the Church*. See, I keep my promise; when 'toil and trouble begins or interest ends,' I say, stop and read something else."

My friend was laudably solicitous as to whether this was sound advice: she thought "that where there was no pain, there would be no cure;" so besides urging my own experience, I sought and found authority in a book in which authority may be found on almost any subject of interest which can be named—I mean Boswell's *Johnson*.

Dr. Johnson said that for general improvement a man should read whatever his immediate inclination prompted. "What we read with inclination makes a much stronger impression. If we read without inclination, half the mind is employed in fixing the attention, so there is but one half to be employed on what we read;" and this the Doctor said when sixty-seven years had rolled over his sober head.

Again, "Idleness is a disease which must be combated; but I would not advise a rigid adherence to a particular plan of study." My plan requires no rigid adherence, but allows full latitude, as the Doctor goes on to require. "I, myself, have never persisted in any plan for two

days together. A man ought to read just as inclination leads him, for what he reads as a task will do him little good."

My advice coincides with that of the Doctor: I would afford all the assistance of method without cramping the strong spring of inclination. Where two books, or two courses of reading, are equally amusing, there is no hardship in being restricted to the more improving.

This advice was followed. A few evenings after, I found my pupil had read with the sharp edge of curiosity, and, of course, had digested lives of Ridley and Cranmer, and had become curious still further about Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Mary. "What!" I said; "how came these characters to interest you more to-day than when you read of them in Hume?" "Because," was the natural reply, "the association was different. I care more about those who fought or befriended the pope, than about men who lost heads or won crowns, to say nothing of long chapters about primogeniture, in which, by the way, our friend is so accurate; but I understand it is only from association with his law books."

My principle was now understood, that *every person has his peculiar curiosity, on attending to the dictates of which his memory and improvement depend.*

This curiosity is an appetite which "grows by what it feeds on." Let me relate another passage of my experience drawn from my diary:—"A most wonderfully retentive memory has that Captain Evans we met yesterday," said a young friend to me; "he talks on every subject; strange that Mr. Wood, when here on his circuit, did not think more of him." "I should wonder more if he did; the captain talks for effect: he has more vanity than love of literature: Mr. Wood truly remarked what a bore the man was; that he went away like a steam-engine in his own line, but clogged the moment he got off it; pursued no game but what he himself had started; could fight but badly on his own ground, and was no match for the poorest antagonist on any other. Strangely enough, there was another person in the same company, of known depth and research, who heard this "captain bold" without taking the trouble to correct his facts, or question his conclusions; and who also observed the next day, he "only wished men would not worry their friends in the evening with what they had read without understanding the very same morning."

How true is the observation that men who have not studied some one subject as a profession, or with as much assiduity and thought as a profession requires, having no standard of accu-

racy, can rarely speak creditably on any single topic. Lies, whether expressed or implied (and what is affectation but lies in a state of solution?) always discourage truth, and the humble endeavors of simple honesty: so, a youth honorably desirous of improvement was almost persuaded by the empty pretensions of a shallow boaster, that the knowledge worthy of a proper man is beyond ordinary ability to attain.

"Well," said my young friend, "all I know is, I should have felt more comfortable had I known more of the subject he was discussing. The last war—Napoleon—Nelson—and Wellington, are matters about which I have a very confused and shallow stock of information. How should I proceed?—'Gurwood's Despatches,' Alison, volumes of Southey on the Peninsula, and others on the Revolution, will take me so long, I shall starve for want of knowledge before I gain it at this slow rate."

He was soon made to understand that these were not the books to begin with, and was warned with the mention of Robinson Crusoe's boat, too big to launch, and his first plan of a goat-pen, two miles round, which would have given him as little property in his flock as if he had no pen at all. My friend saw that long historical works, and most others, consist of two parts:—

First, *facts*.

Secondly, *observations on facts*.

As to the facts, he did not want to know thoroughly all the minutiae mentioned in the books above mentioned—a perfect knowledge of a very small portion would satisfy him for the present; a small collection would serve as standards round which other ideas might rally, as fixed points, for association, in aid of memory, and as links, however coarse, to make the chain complete, till time were allowed to substitute links stronger and more minute. This youth had also the confidence to allow that, by comparison of facts, he might discern effects and causes, and have a home supply of observations; for the larger stock of ideas we import the less we grow, and the more minds fall out of cultivation. I encouraged him with the prospect of becoming in course of time almost exclusively his own grower and consumer as to observations: and when books are to be read for culling facts alone, and most observations passed by as already known, he saw that cumbrous volumes would in effect be considerably reduced in size, and asked, “Is this the reason I see you with a book on your favorite subject, turning over the leaves without seeming to read five lines out of a page?” “Yes, frequently five lines are enough to show what the author is going to observe, and by degrees

we obtain the same facility in reading facts as observations. Did you not see me the other day pass over nearly a whole chapter of travels in Russia? The table of contents showed me that it contained substantially the same matter as a volume I had just before read on the same subject."


However, let no readers be encouraged by these observations to fall into a careless and desultory habit. I allow them to miss what they already *know*: I do not say what they have already *read*. Accurate reading and reflection are their own reward, by saving time and trouble in the end. Sheridan truly remarked, "Instead of always reading, think, *think*, on every subject: there are only a few leading ideas, and these we may excogitate for ourselves." While others talk of so many hours of daily study, and so many books read, those who really improve think only of questions solved and clear knowledge attained. "So, my friend," I continued, "to gain confidence in speaking of Napoleon and his contemporaries, take first of all a book of facts; do as I did some years since, in idle time, by the sea-side:—I took Miller's History of Great Britain from George II. to George IV. (published 1834, by Jones, Finsbury Square), one double-columned volume of 400 pages; giving something like an

epitome of the newspapers, from 1760 to 1820, and bearing on each page, in two or three places, lines in capitals, drawing attention to the respective topics, as in pages 332 and 333 : Advance of the British into Spain, under Sir John Moore; again, Sir J. Moore's retreat; again, Battle of Corunna and death of Moore.*

"I commenced at p. 207, which gave the history of the end of the year 1789: I wrote on the top of every page, A. D. 17—, or A. D. 18—," and in this manner my book became a ready book of reference for any newspaper allusion to the days of our fathers. A few days' reading took me through the 200 pages, which gave the history from the beginning of the Revolution to the death of George III. Still I intended to read the same two or three times more. I was in haste to complete, as I say, my chain in a fair, substantial way first, and strengthen it afterwards. I did not read from end to end; but when tired, I used to dip into interesting parts, such as victories and state trials; so this history suited me in all humors, whether as a novel or work of memory. It would puzzle any one to guess what parts made most impression on my memory: they were not "the

* The same general course may be pursued with any other history of this period, which the reader may find more accessible than the volumes of Miller.—AM. ED.

moving incidents by flood and field," but facts which I might probably have overlooked, had they not happened to form the subject of conversation, and thus became matters of special interest.

- "There is a maxim among lawyers, that private reading makes little impression till legal practice shows its use, and fixes attention to important points. Daily intercourse with men and books serves the general reader as practice serves the lawyer; by fixing attention, it insures memory. Nor is this the only point of comparison. Do you think any lawyer's knowledge can comprehend *all* the ponderous volumes in a complete law library, and these, to the uninitiated, seem equally deserving of study?
- Certainly not. Then how do they know which to choose as most useful to meet and answer all cases that occur? Practice shows the general demand, and this they prepare to supply. So the general reader, like the lawyer, must study to be strong on those points on which not only his own consciousness but the strength of those he encounters shows his weakness. This leads me to remark why the same book may be read again and again with continually increasing interest and profit, because the interval between each reading will call attention to a new order of facts, and elicit a new series of conclusions.
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All this I draw faithfully from the history of the progress of my own mind."

"And how did you proceed when you had read this part of history once?"

"I had a friend who was fond of discussing the same subject; one who had long lived by the sea, conversed with naval officers, listened with me to many an hour's yarn from an old Trafalgar man, while cruising in the *Rose* yacht off Tenby and Caldy, and had often surprised me with the apparent extent of his knowledge. His conversation increased my interest, and made my reading more profitable. I then read Southey's *Life of Nelson*, and the *Life of Napoleon*, by Lockhart. These books are quite easy reading, except allusions to the history of the times, a knowledge of which is always indispensable in reading for real improvement; and this knowledge makes the sound and accurate man, and distinguishes our well-read friend from the loquacious captain.

"On so good an opportunity let me add a word of caution. I have suggested sometimes 'to read and skip,' but to skip only the known, not the unknown. These historical allusions I readily found out, by looking over the occurrences of the same year in my history. Thus, while the history explained the biography, the biography drew attention to the history. True

it is that all readers may occasionally be at a loss for an allusion ; if they do their best to explain it, this is immaterial ; but those literary epicures who touch nothing but dainties, and pick all books for the amusing, will never enjoy a sound intellectual constitution, but will acquire an unnatural appetite, no longer a criterion of their ability to digest. Once form a habit of reading solely and exclusively what pleases at the moment, once blunt the natural sense of satisfaction, which the sound mind feels from doing things thoroughly, and from that moment you have bartered the literary resources of a life for the excitement of an hour. This custom of referring to explain allusions, need not check the interest of your subject. I often mark on a blank leaf a mark of interrogation, and against this set the number of the pages containing difficulties, till I have finished reading, and then make all the references at once. Even if you should not succeed in your search at the time, this practice will fix the difficulties in your memory so firmly that you will be on the alert for future elucidations.

“ But, you ask, what was the result of the line of reading I have mentioned ? The result was, that my friend was quite surprised at the accuracy of my knowledge of his favorite parts of modern history ; and even touching naval his-

tory, he could tell me little that I did not know. Now, observe, this was an idle man who had nothing to do but to read every periodical or new publication of interest; he had read numerous volumes on the topics on which I had read but three. At the time I was surprised; but observation has since made me fully alive to these seeming anomalies. My knowledge, I knew, was shallow, but his no longer seemed deep. This gave me confidence. I have since found that there are very, very few readers so familiar with any topic, that ordinary ability, with methodical application, may not greatly surpass them after a few days of diligent study.

“To continue my method with history: Miller’s History has since served me as a book of reference, and stands on the same shelf with my Biographical and other Dictionaries. It shows at one view a picture of those by-gone days and departed heroes, of whom we hear old gentlemen talk, when they claim their prerogative of a little conversational monopoly, and swell with a very innocent kind of self-importance, as they tell the cold perspiration that came over their patriotic brows the morning they heard of the mutiny at the Nore, the projected invasion, and the Bank stopping payment; and how they laughed and triumphed in the truth of, if not their own, at least some near relative’s prognos-

tication that Nelson would find the foe and beat him too; how melancholy they felt as our Hero's funeral passed, and how they sympathized with the honest tars who followed in the mournful throng. To all such conversation listen most attentively; but since all you will learn from it is inaccurate, and unconnected, instead of being satisfied with half a story, go at once to the book to ascertain time, place, and characters, and then 'give to airy nothing a local habitation and a name.' On this principle, in reading Ireland's Seven Years of France, from 1815-22, I cast my eye over the pages of Miller, on which I had marked the corresponding seven years: I did the same before reading every other book relating to the same period. But I shall be reminded that I promised to make my course amusing; and most amusing was the method I am relating; for, in course of time, I selected from old Reviews and Magazines only such articles as were amusing: but at that time the sphere of my amusement was enlarged; my mind was stored with facts on which I thirsted for more minute information; and since all these were read with an appetite, all were easily digested. In order to register my reading, and preserve order in my studies, I marked on the margin of the History what books or essays gave exact information on different subjects,


vide Southey, p. —, or Gentleman's Magazine, No. —; or read Mackintosh's Observations on the French Revolution, p. —; Burke's Opinion, see Life, p. —. So my History became an Index or Common-Place Book.

"The time at which reading is most improving, is when, as you read the table of contents, you feel impatience to begin the chapter, as containing exactly the facts you want to know—the very observations you wish to compare with your own. And this eager curiosity and zest for reading will have a continually wider field for its exertion, till at last every book will have its interest. Did you never hear a man fond of literature, say 'Give me any book; I do not mind what it is.'

"While asking this question, there rises before me a vision of one, an accomplished scholar and hard-worked man of active life, standing amidst a nursery of children, so riveted on one of their story books picked off the floor, that the young fry, spite of all their pulling at his skirts, and clinging to his knees, despaired in their impatience at moving him, till one cried out, 'Ah! I knew if we did not keep our picture books away from him, he would not let us ride on his foot till he had read them all through.'

"None but those so eminently blessed with mental endowments, can conceive all the pleas-

ures which spring from the well-formed and fertile mind; it seems ready fitted with little cells for all sweets; to have a distinct pigeon-hole for every kind of communication: every acquisition has a tendency not to dissolve and darken, but to crystallize in brilliancy and beauty; however extended its chain, each link ends in a hook for joining more. These are the minds which in society give almost as much pleasure as they enjoy: they find companions even in those whom their friends apologize for asking them to meet. Dr. Johnson said he would rather sit next an intelligent man of the world than a scholar; for the man who has learned life from nature's own volume, is provided with a supply as varied and as rich, as is the store from which he draws; he can repay with genuine unclipped coin, in bold relief, fresh from Nature's mint: however small his after-dinner contribution to the common fund of entertainment, it still is sterling, pure, and unadulterated. Gray said of Boswell's Corsica, that it proved any man with talent or without could write a useful book, if he would only faithfully, and without affectation, detail what he had seen and heard in a sphere which the rest of the world had never seen, and was curious to know. In this point of view the man of well-formed mind regards companions; he is



fully prepared to be entertained by the humblest relator of 'things that he doth know:' he consequently is qualified to be always pleasing; for be it observed, men please in society not in proportion as they inform, but as they elicit; and who are so able to elicit as those who are not vain-glorious to pour forth, but habitually intent on the great end of all company and conversation—to hear, and observe, and be improved?"

CHAPTER II.

HOW TO BEGIN AND GO ON.

PROCEEDING pretty nearly in the way just described, I endeavored to give my young friend a good general idea of my system of operations in matters of this kind, for years past; and I am happy to know that it was with the best effect. Not to dwell, however, on this, let me ask the reader to consider some of the various subjects of study—History, Biography, Poetry, &c.—and to see if it can be ascertained with what authors, and what method, each line of study should be pursued. And here let it be clearly understood, once for all, that I am not prescribing for the sound and vigorous patient, for the unwearied man of letters, but rather for the delicate, weak, and disordered appetite, which requires humoring and coaxing at first to bring it to health and strength. If any say, "What a shallow course this is!" I reply, "This is precisely what I intend it to be;—still it is too deep, unhappily, for many."

First let me resume a topic on which I have already touched. I can explain my method better with some subject-matter as an example, so we will consider English History.

Chinese scholars are divided into two classes, says a traveller, those who read only, and those who understand what they read. This distinction may be drawn nearer home. Those who *read* and those who *remember* are often different parties, and so also are those who remember and those who *digest*. Readers who only retain facts, having minds like the article headed with *Farrago*, or *Multum in Parvo*, in the newspapers, are not always the persons who, by digesting, classifying, and inferring, have a stock of really available information. Now I feel I should be doing little if I did not teach so to read that we may first remember what we read; secondly, digest it; thirdly, have it ready and available. To do this, of course, it cannot be a large, voluminous work. Begin with a very short History of England first—the Outline by the Society already mentioned. I know a child of ten years of age who learned this so thoroughly, that he could answer any question. I once defied an old college companion to puzzle him; and after receiving an accurate answer to twenty-three questions out of twenty-four, my friend wanted to know how it was possible for a child

to learn so much. I showed the book—a well chosen outline, too bare and meagre to be alone very improving—too jejune a skeleton to satisfy the cravings of a really healthy and hungry mind, yet it contained all matters within the comprehension of a child.

Fine painters tell their pupils, first draw a correct outline—let your anatomy be correct first; it is easy to fill in, and to color afterwards. With this little history you have the figure—the bones; but we must galvanize this anatomy and add flesh, substance, vigor, and life; we must make these bones live. Let this outline history represent the long stem of a tree. How are we to fill it up? It looks hollow at present, without leaves or branches. With this kind of drawing the pupil may begin to fill in just when he pleases, provided he takes care that the outline does not become erased, and that the whole figure of his tree is plainly before his eye from first to last. Every one, according to his taste or ability, may work out and bring into bolder relief and more substantial form any part he pleases. It is immaterial whether he proceeds up or down. Even the idle have a natural disposition to do even the most toilsome work, in order to complete and connect little blanks that disfigure their work. No one would finish head, limbs, and breast, and then leave the figure like

Tityus, with vitals doomed never to heal. The straightforward way to fill up your tree would be to take up another larger history; not Hume's, it is too big as yet; but Goldsmith's first. The time required for learning these two will not be as long as would be required for Goldsmith's, without these smaller works as an introduction. The parts which are substantially the same in all will be taken at a glance, and serve pleasantly to refresh memory, rather than exhaust attention. We feel a secret pleasure in our studies when we meet with what we know; it shows we are improving, however gradually, to that state in which we may read whole volumes rather to judge and pronounce, than merely to be taught without discretion. Even Goldsmith gives little more than an outline; but outline is a comparative term: he gives such an outline as deserves to be considered very substantial in comparison with the historical knowledge that most, even of those reputed well informed, really possess.

"One half the world does not know how the other half lives," and if it is not generally known how many things half the world lives and dies without enjoying, most truly may this be said of intellectual stores. How few would like to confess the little that they know—at least, the very limited number of correct replies

they could at any moment sit down and write, for another's judgment, to questions which were within the capacity even of a child. Supposing ourselves born with minds literally a blank sheet of paper, and that these tablets were required to be laid open for the inspection of our neighbors, should we not feel how little there was to be seen on topics with which we were supposed to be so well acquainted, and how indistinctly and inaccurately even that little was inscribed? Were the minds of many thus laid bare, all that at the moment remained for judgment would seem less the acquisitions of a life than the desultory reading of an hour. Oh! if the pale patient, blistered, bled, and reduced, could so read his physician—if the client with his estate in chancery could so pry into the narrow data on which his lawyer founds such broad conclusions—if those who dream of the unlimited powers of ministerial sagacity could so prove "with what very little wisdom the world is governed," many would agree that the goodness of Providence is in no way more remarkable than in this, that in the wise economy of creation, all disturbing causes are so nicely calculated and balanced, that busy man has even less power to do mischief, than he imagines to do good.

Let none despair because his knowledge

seems little, if it is only accurate. The Germans, who so well understand practical education, say "nothing is so prolific as a little known well." Knowledge increases in a geometrical ratio. The total of the acquisitions of the mind is the continued product, rather than the sum of all it contains.

A little sound and well digested historical knowledge will be always useful; but if the facts are mistaken, the deductions must be as false in matter as they are logical in form; and all arguments will be as absurd as the answer of a sum in arithmetic with an error in the first line. This inaccuracy accounts for the obstinacy of those called wrong-headed men. They are sure their reasoning is right; but as their facts happen to be wrong, they have only the advantage of "method in their madness," and blundering by rule.

This is a topic on which I am the more disposed to dwell, because many, really capable of knowledge, remain in ignorance from two causes. First, from an opinion that any available degree of information is beyond their powers. Secondly, because others appear to know so much that all they can learn will be nothing in comparison. The latter should be consoled with the above observations, and taught to beware of shallow pretenders, and

men who always talk on their own topics. "You are surprised," said Talleyrand, "that I talk so well. Tell me, would it be no advantage to draw an enemy to your own ground, and only fight where your strength is concentrated and your position commanding? That is precisely my art." Men lose no credit by being often silent, if, when they speak, they speak to the purpose. Bacon refines upon this, and says, "He who is silent where he is known to be informed, will be believed to be informed where from ignorance he is silent." Again, Rochefoucauld observes, "The desire to seem learned prevents many from becoming such." Numbers do we meet who make a profession of small talk—not more quaintly than properly so called—for what can show more littleness, what can be more unworthy the serious application of the human mind,—an instrument capable of mastering principles of extensive application, of discerning truth in matters where the harmonious movement of the vast and complicated machinery of social life may be disordered by the prevalence of error,—than to be limited to the petty domestic history of beings of a day, who owe a week's celebrity to the difficulty of filling newspapers—a knowledge that must begin almost "de novo" every session of parliament. If you study, exclusively devoted to

the secret improvement of your own mind, and for the pleasures a well stored mind has ever at command, you will at the same time be taking the readiest means to "shine in society;" but if you seek the vain glory and opinion of others, you will sacrifice real improvement to the pursuit, and gain, at best, but the commendation of fools. "Let every man," said Lord Bolingbroke, "read according to his profession or walk in life. Suppose that a man shuts himself up in his study twenty years, and then comes forth profoundly learned in Arabic, he gains a great name; but where is the good of it?" There was an undergraduate at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1829, who was famed for knowing the names, drivers, coach inns, times of starting and arrival, of most of the principal stages in England. The absurdity of this is too apparent to be imitated; but I will not say too great. There are many powerful minds at the present moment devoted to pursuits quite as unprofitable to others, and nearly as unimproving to themselves.

The other class whom diffidence deters from a literary course must be encouraged by the words of Sir J. Reynolds, addressed to the pupils of the Royal Academy; he says:—"The travellers into the East tell us, that when the ignorant inhabitants of those countries are asked

concerning the ruins of stately edifices yet remaining amongst them, the melancholy monuments of their former grandeur and long-lost science, they always answer, 'they were built by magicians.' The untaught mind finds a vast gulf between its own powers and those works of complicated art, which it is utterly unable to fathom; and it supposes that such a void can be passed only by supernatural powers." What Sir Joshua Reynolds says of painting is true of literature. Those who know not the *cause* of any thing extraordinary and beyond them, may well be astonished at the *effect*; and what the uncivilized ascribe to magic, others ascribe to genius: two mighty pretenders, who for the most part are safe from rivalry only because, by the terror of their name, they discourage in their own peculiar sphere that resolute and sanguine spirit of enterprise which is essential to success. But all magic is science in disguise: let us proceed to take off the mask—to show that the mightiest objects of our wonder are mere men like ourselves; have attained their superiority by steps which we can follow; and that we can, at all events, walk in the same path, though there remains at last a space between us.

Think of the wit of Hudibras! How wonderful the mind which could in the same page illustrate and throw into relief, as it were, by a

single touch, distinct ideas, by reference to things of classes so different, that the fact of thought being employed about the one would seem to insure its overlooking the other. How strange that more witty things should occur to Butler while writing one page, and that bearing every appearance of an off-hand composition, than would occur to most men while writing a volume. Now draw back the curtain and the phantom resolves itself into the common things of daily life.

"*The author of Hudibras,*" said Johnson, "had a common-place book, in which he had repositied, not such events or precepts as are gathered by reading, but such remarks, similitudes, allusions, assemblages, or inferences, as occasion prompted, or inclination produced; those thoughts which were generated in his own mind, and might be usefully applied to some future purpose. Such is the labor of those who write for immortality."

Much as I admire Hudibras, I cannot help believing that the reason so many of its imitators have failed is, that they endeavor to meet at the moment a demand for wit which Butler had been a life preparing to supply. I have known men of little talent so ready, by the practice of a few months, with an inferior species of wit,—puns, that I see no reason why

many men of superior talents should not rival Butler in a higher kind, if they only had recourse to the labor and method which a great authority says is the price of immortality.

See the miser in his lonely walk—his head down—his soul grovelling in the dust—all his senses intent on one narrow, sordid pursuit, money or money's worth ;—look, he turns from the path on to the road :—"Is it? no, not a farthing, but a button—and no shank. Ah! buttons often leave their shanks behind." Still he takes it, and walks on. See again : "A tube—tin is it?—spout of something—may come useful one day—may find something it will fit: did once, two years after—fetched two pence." Look at him; scan that perversion of human kind, and say—were that man, old as he is, self-denying as he is, persevering and devoted as he ever has been, through many a toilsome day and restless night, a miser, not of pence but of ideas, of the coin of the mind, were he equally capable of putting in his claim when none knew the rightful owner of one thing, of effacing marks of identity in a second, equally ingenious, in converting a third, or of matching a fourth, what might not the same habits with the same limited faculties accomplish!

Again,—think of Sheridan. His speech on the impeachment of Hastings so completely

ruled the spirits of his hearers that Pitt said, "All parties were under the wand of the enchanter, and only vied with each other in describing the fascination under which they were held." This would seem like genius—like inspiration: but if genius means, as in the common acceptation it does mean, a power that attains its end by means wholly new and unpractised by others, then was Sheridan's speech no work of genius. Moore paints him at his desk, like other mortal men, writing and erasing,—“Mr. *Speaker*,” to fill up this pause, and “Sir,” to fill up that; and confirms me in the opinion of Sir Joshua Reynolds—that the effects of genius must have their causes, and that these may for the most part be analysed, digested, and copied; though sometimes they may be too subtle to be reduced to a written art. Sheridan stored up his wit like Butler. Some of his famous witticisms were found in his desk, written first in one form and then in another—the point shifted to try the effect from one part of the sentence to another; and thus did he laboriously mould and manufacture what he had the art to utter as an impromptu.

I dispute not Sheridan's brilliant talents. I only argue that, high as they were, they were much lower than the ignorant rated them. I would maintain that even the mightiest con-

descended to certain rules and methods of study by which the humblest are able to profit; and, amongst other ways and means, to return from this digression introduced for the reader's encouragement,—men of the highest endowments have practised and bequeathed outlines of history, plans like my trees of knowledge, and common-place books.

Suppose, then, you proceed to fill up your historical tree with Goldsmith or Keightley; you may either read it from end to end, and inscribe Goldsmith or Keightley along the whole length of the stem, and feel that you know a more substantial outline than before: or you may choose particular reigns which are most interesting to you, and record on the stem, "Henry VIII., or C. II.—*Goldsmith—Keightley*;" and leave the other reigns as curiosity dictates. But is it not the best plan to read a history through, and master all the difficulties? The best plan undoubtedly if you can do it; that is, if you can not only so read, but remember and digest: but if your mental constitution is not yet equal to the whole course and regimen, part is better than none at all: and there are very few young people who can profit by the whole of any history the first time of reading; therefore, why should they read what they cannot digest, and must therefore discourage them? I only recog-

nize the extent of curiosity for the time being as a guide in reading, because nothing discourages and gives a dislike to study so much as persevering with the book before the eyes while the thoughts are wandering far away.

The next question is, "How am I to proceed when I have read Goldsmith's History, or such reigns as suit my capacity? Shall I read Hume and Smollett?" Certainly not *all* the volumes, of which most young persons would forget the first before they had read the last. But ask yourself whether you feel so far interested in any particular part of history, that you are curious to read a more minute detail. If pleased with any one reign, or war, or negotiation; or should the comments and observations with which men of genius have illustrated such portions excite your curiosity, turn to these portions in a longer history—Hume or any other. The most profitable time to study any subject is while you feel a lively interest. Then, record on the corresponding part of your tree, "Hen. VIII. or C. II., by Hume:" and thus your tree will grow in strength and substance. But with every addition to strengthen a particular part of your historical fabric, be sure you cast your eye over the whole work, to see that it yet remains entire. If you cannot readily run over in your mind the simple outline of the whole, you

should refresh your memory with the outline history before you proceed.

Doubtless this advice must seem new: but the oldest things were new once; and all improvements must be novelties. Old usage and length of service appeal to our feelings; and wholesome customs are sometimes allowed the weight of laws: but if certain ways and means have stood the wreck, but not the test of time—if the good old tree beneath which our grandsires have gambolled has ever borne more leaves than fruit, cumbering the ground, time-worn but not time-honored, then root it up at once, and make room for those with which the science of to-day, collected from the failures of the past, enriches the rising generation. And certainly as to the common ways and modes of study, “if *mode* it can be called where *mode* is none,” judging by results, we can say little indeed in their favor. I ask any person of advanced years, “Could you call to mind more than one young person out of fifty who ever pursued private reading with a degree of method and judgment calculated to ensure success in the common avocations of life?” Consider common language, which often betrays common practice, and you will remember that the usual and very significant expression is, “We have *read* this book;” not “We know it.” Hobbes of Malmesbury used

to say, "If I had read as many books as other persons I should probably know as little." And this philosopher is only one out of many hundreds of worthy witnesses, in intellectual matters at least, who, both by counsel and example, teach us to read a little, and that little well: such men think and count, not by the books they read, but the subjects they exhaust. Swift said that the reason a certain university was a learned place was, that most persons took some learning there, and few brought any away with them, so it accumulated. Now could it be said of our minds, that every habit tended to add, but nothing to take away, what a stock might not even the most moderate reader soon command? These rules, though new, are not untried; more than one of my friends has followed them, and proceeded with continually increasing interest,—the necessary consequence of a sense of steady and unintermitting improvement.

Let us now suppose that by a course of methodical study you have filled up the greater part of your outline from Hume or some larger history: what now will be the extent of your knowledge? Will you be disheartened if you are told that you have nothing but an outline still? for this is scarcely an exaggeration. It is true that in some periods Hume may have given

as full particulars as contemporary authorities supply, or the most scrutinizing curiosity desires; but upon the greater part of events all he gives is a mere outline or epitome of original annals. For instance, Froissart's Chronicle alone is equal in bulk to Hume's eight volumes, although it comprehends scarcely an eighth part the number of years. Again, reckoning, and there is good authority for so doing, one of our largest newspapers of a double sheet equal to two octavos, the news of the nation, apart from advertisements and trivial subjects, would make a history as large as Hume about once a month. What a bare outline must eight volumes contain of matter which represents, not months, but centuries!

Then on what an ocean we embark! Can we ever follow out so large a plan? Have patience. After mentioning many volumes of English history, I was going to add, not that there were so many to read, but so many from which to choose; and, of course, the larger the choice the more easy to suit each variety of taste.

Without dictating the extent of your studies, I would show you how to make the little time you employ go as far as possible; for which purpose I advise a short outline of all the reigns, and a minute knowledge of parts; and for this reason:—The sketches of the historian are like

those of the artist. You may have, first, an outline which gives rather the shadows of men than the men themselves; you may have a broader outline, which still leaves every man alike; you may have the figures rudely filled up, giving substantial form and individual character, but still stiff and inanimate; or, lastly, you may have a faithful expression of impassioned agents, delineating an interesting passage of real life. Now which would you prefer,—one good historical picture—say a panorama of the Battle of Waterloo, in which you could understand all the movements, positions, and manoeuvres of one mighty action, which would serve as a key to every other, or a long series of the usual battle-pieces, differing from each other in little else than in the artist's partiality for fire and smoke?

The leading facts and events of history may be copied and handed down from age to age. By industrious research, ingenious writers may ascertain the details of wars and treaties at a distant period of time: but contemporaries alone can draw characters, and amuse us with vivid portraiture. This was Johnson's remark on Robertson's histories. He said the characters in history must be fiction, unless drawn by those who knew the persons, as Sallust and Clarendon. Sir Joshua Reynolds remarked, that the

distinctness of Robertson's historical characters was caused at the expense of truth, by exaggerating their more marked features. And Sir Robert Walpole, when, as Mr. Croker quotes, his son Horace offered to amuse him with reading, said, "Any thing but history; that must be false:"—by which rather extravagant speech he probably meant to say that the imputed motives, the finer springs of actions, and the minute detail of concurrent causes, were, for obvious reasons, so inscrutable to historians, that he cared not for their works.

Wherefore, in preference to dry outline, enlivened only by fictitious circumstances and plausible reasonings on doubtful data, read the history of a limited period, by men who had some opportunity at least of knowing what they wrote.

This mode of historical study is supported by high authority. Bacon remarked, he should like a history formed of the genuine works of all the writers of their own times, arranged, and, if requisite, translated, but not abbreviated. "For compilers," said he, "are the very 'moths of history.'" Consider what was passing in Bacon's mind when he made choice of this expression. History, as faithfully related by a series of writers, each detailing what he saw and heard, seemed to Bacon like a fine piece of

tapestry, wherein were delineated figures that seemed to move and breathe in positions which told the whole story—who the victors—who the vanquished—the cause of the strife—the fire of the chiefs, and the struggles of the men. To such “cunning embroidery” we may liken the varied and vivid page of Froissart; but when Hume comes in the character of moth the first, makes havoc of all colors and perspective, till no eye can distinguish between friend and foe—when Goldsmith follows as moth the second, eats up each remnant of distinctive character and vitality, and makes the living motionless as the slain—and lastly, Pinnock, as moth the third, preys on what the other two had spared, and makes skeletons both of the dying and the dead—surely such shadowy sketches of things that were cannot so far give the character of the past as to make it what history should be—the mirror of the future—the lessons of philosophy teaching by example. With this picture present to my mind, I call Goldsmith’s history an outline—a skeleton: it contains topics under which you may very conveniently arrange ideas derived from other writers. But to be contented with such an outline alone is like taking the trouble of providing yourself with a frame of pigeon-holes for historical papers, and collecting no papers to fill

them. For to say such epitomes alone give distinct ideas is absurd: only suppress the names, and then if we ask which is Oliver Cromwell, and which is Wellington, we may well be answered, like children at the peep-show, "Which you please."

Let it be granted, then, that since the voluminous histories in common use, such as Hume's, Smollett's, and others, which do not contain a simple account of the days in which their authors severally lived, pass over matters with so light a touch, readers who confine themselves to their compositions, evidently pursue rather the shadow than the substance of real knowledge. And this is a postulate, to speak mathematically, which Coleridge might as readily grant with the writings of Hume as with those of Gibbon, of whom he said, in his "Table Talk," that he passes along from height to height, so as to convey more the idea of romance than of history, and shows nothing of the wide flats and valleys of real life.

Indeed it cannot be supposed that Hume, or any other single writer, could investigate the memorable achievements of sixteen hundred years. How his fingers must tire ere he could unfold all the time-worn records of ages past! How his eyes must swim over the black-lettered Chronicles! Think of the many volumes

which, as Hallam says, are rather the property of moths than men, would try his sight and test his patience, before he could give their meed of fame to Romans, Britons, Danes, Saxons, Normans. Well might Edmund Burke say he found Hume not very deeply versed in the early part of British history. The powers of the mind, like the waters of the sea, though vast and deep, are limited to bounds they cannot pass; and when highest in one part are lowest in another. So Lady Wortley Montagu complained, after making an attempt to become intelligible to all her household at Pera, from whom, be it known to all housekeepers of these degenerate days, she was doomed to hear the same excuse ten times told in ten different languages. The practice of one language had a tendency to diminish her aptitude for another; and her English was falling into decay. Burke said that Hume acknowledged that from the early historians he derived no increased satisfaction to lead him on to deep research: and Burke considered himself a competent judge, having gone through the early authorities. The reign he thought most carefully composed was that of Charles II. And here we may notice a vulgar error, that Smollett wrote a continuation of Hume. The truth is, that Smollett wrote a History of England from the time of the inva-

sion of the Romans. It is not one of the least of the curiosities of literature that the fame of Hume should so completely have eclipsed that of Smollett as to overlay all that part of his work which could possibly enter into competition with his own. Even a writer in the "Edinburgh Review," October, 1839, observed,— "Smollett has made a sorry figure by continuing the History of England."

Is it then the conclusion of all this, that we must actually make out history for ourselves? —Yes. This is the legitimate conclusion from all my reasoning, that though what is called history is of some small value, inasmuch as it keeps the terms and forms of knowledge from passing into oblivion, still it is truly composed more of names than things, rather shadowy than substantial, and greatly inferior to what an intelligent reader may easily be led to collect for himself. You must choose between these mottoes: "Every man his own historian," or "No man an historian at all:" take which you please. I am not guilty of making the difficulty, only of stating it; though real difficulty there is none, as you shall soon acknowledge: the only trouble consists in making choice of proper authors, or proper parts of them. But here let me meet the old objection—"We have been always advised to read books through from end

to end." The only consistent meaning of this advice is, to read no books but are worth thorough reading. The principle is good; but if taken literally, you would read dictionaries through, or cyclopædias, which is absurd; as indeed old Dr. Johnson once remarked, in talking of a printed letter from the Rev. Herbert Croft to his pupil.

Johnson: "This is surely a strange advice. You may as well resolve that whatever men you happen to get acquainted with, you are to keep to them for life. A book may be good for nothing, or there may be only one thing in it worth knowing: are we to read it all through?" It is well known that the Doctor said he never read any book through but the Bible. Adam Smith said, "Johnson knew more books than any man alive;" and Boswell innocently remarks, "He had a peculiar facility in seizing at once what was valuable in any book, without submitting to the labor of perusing it from beginning to end."

To draw a correct outline first, carefully preserving and retracing it from time to time, while filling up according to inclination or ability, is the method I propose to explain and illustrate; and though I am now showing its application only to history, I shall presently have occasion to explain how well it is adapted for directing

the pursuits of general knowledge, avoiding confusion, and marking progress in any subject the student may select.

"Well, then," the intelligent reader, desirous of increasing in knowledge and wisdom, will, perhaps, say, "here are my outlines. I have drawn the trunk of my tree: now for the leaves and branches."

"Leaves and branches must be drawn in proportion to the maturity and vigor of the tree; or, to speak more plainly, consider your curiosity, taste, and inclination. The strong food of the full-grown man will not serve as nourishment for babes. Let us see if it be not so "

CHAPTER III.

READERS AND BOOKS: USE AND ABUSE.

It is something worth having to be able to *classify* those who read; and it will help one to determine his own position to consider this portion of our subject a little more fully than at first might seem necessary. It is always well to know where we are in our mental as well as our ordinarily worldly progress.

Most, if not all readers, I apprehend, may be ranged under one or other of *three classes*.

1. One class of readers requires *excitement*, and that kind of interest which it is the part of the novelist to supply. Their favorite books are of the nature of the "Newgate Calendar" and "Terrific Register." They read for the pleasure of conjuring up horrid scenes in their imaginations, and enjoying that sense of comparative security which the poet Lucretius has so sublimely noticed. If it be true that—

The stage but echoes back the public voice—

if, that is to say, the current theme of every novel and romance shows the public taste as plainly as the cut and colors in the dressmaker's window show the ruling fashion, we can readily discern one of the oldest favorites of a very large section of the literary circle,—I mean in homely vernacular "Hanging Stories." "God's Revenge against Murder" was the title of one of the earliest books ever printed. Punch and Judy, with the gallows and the public functionary, is one of the oldest shows, nor at any fair in the country does it find a more fearful rival than "Maria and the Red Barn," or any "most barbarous and inhuman murder, with the ghost of the unhappy victim." George Barnwell, and many other plots, too exciting in their very name to allow of very fastidious criticism as to their composition, have contributed to supply the same demand, with the same commodity, in different forms down to the present day. And now in the development of every plot, whether they be or be not

Dignus vindice nodus,

a murder and the hangman seem as common a resource as a broken heart, or blacksmith of Gretna Green in the novels of our younger days. Mr. Gibbon Wakefield, about ten years since, wrote an interesting pamphlet "On Crime in

the Metropolis;" in which he says that by comparing the statements of a large number of prisoners in Newgate, he ascertained that inveterate thieves rarely failed to be present at an execution, not so much for an opportunity of picking pockets, as for the pleasure of excitement, which, he says, by the very exciting nature of their lawless pursuits, thieves soon become too callous to derive from any ordinary source. There is something true to nature—painfully true, in these words, and something very like the case of many novel readers, who bring themselves to that morbid state, that they are only to be touched by an appeal to their most vulgar sympathies! Oh! well did Shakspeare know the human heart when he crowded together all the stirring topics of Othello's history. There is many a young lady of whom we might say, that when serious things are talked of, like Desdemona,—

Still the house affairs would draw her thence ;

who yet to a tale like Othello's would

Come again and with greedy ear
Devour up my discourse.

Indeed myriads are there, male and female, who will read only for *excitement*. This stimulus is exhibited by authors in various forms and dif-

ferent quantities. The best employ it like the sweetening or spicing of a draught, to cheat the full-grown child into taking that which ministers to health. I allude not to the folly of writers who mix things sacred with profane, as if those who will profit by holy things will not seek them in holy books; still less do I allude to writers who adopt the marketable form and title of a novel to publish their views of political philosophy, but I refer with great respect to a few novelists who have the goodness and the talent to contrive by their volumes to rivet the attention of many an idle youth, and for a total space of twenty hours, or more, wean him from that,

Which Satan finds for idle hands to do;

and in its stead provide for twenty hours a wholesome exercise for the finest sympathies of the heart. Still when this wholesome recreation fails, literary pastimes of a mere negative character are not to be despised, because they answer the purpose of keeping worse thoughts away, and sometimes lead on the student, step by step, till he reaches the purest sphere of intellectual existence. The first of the classes into which I divide readers then, I consider, like Desdemona, they would have all narrators of Othello's caste, and would read of—

battles, sieges, fortunes ;—
 of most disastrous chances,
 Of moving accidents, by flood and field ;
 Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach ;—
 of antres vast and deserts idle,
 Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven ;—
 And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
 The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
 Do grow beneath their shoulders.—

A book with this page of Shakspeare for its table of contents, would probably be a general favorite with the subscribers of every circulating library in the kingdom ; for the majority of readers are not much above the excitement class. Their state of mind is by no means healthy I allow ; still the lowest order of intellectual is preferable to mere physical resources. A book containing but little good has kept many a youth from company productive of positive evil. The excitement and gross immorality even of the worst of old-fashioned novels is a less pernicious stimulant than lounging night after night with a cigar to the billiard room. Not long since I heard a father say, "If I could only see my boy reading Tom Thumb, I should be happy ; that would be a beginning, but he avoids a book as if it had the plague." The habit of seeking amusement with books is so truly valuable in conducing to limit the sphere of youthful temptations, that a parent does wisely if he encourages it at almost any

cost. Children should be taught that books are as natural a source of fun as tops and balls.

A quondam acquaintance who tried for nearly seven years without success to take a degree at Oxford, met me a short time since, and said, "Books were never put in my way; when I could scarcely read, my guardians sent me to Rugby. My grandmother did once offer to make me a present of the 'Seven Wonders of the World,' or some such book, but I told her I should like the money instead, so she gave me neither. Now I am trying for some situation under Government, but not many will do for me. Head work in an office is out of the question. Something like Commissioner of Woods and Forests, or any *out-of-door work* would suit me exactly."

This is very laughable, but it is very sad. Think of the tedious hours of such a person's in-door life in rainy weather, from breakfast—to dinner—to supper—to bed. "Would it were evening!" "Would it were morning!" and this state of mere vegetation without the energy of life is one in which many a man has existed, and from which many a man might have been snatched away to a sphere of usefulness had his parents been satisfied to give their child stories suitable to his childish taste.

In paying so much deference to the excitement class of readers, I only act on the principle that to keep a child quiet we must give him such toys as he is in a humor to play with. Children (in mind) are found of all ages; and, as Aristotle says, "whether young in years, or young in character, matters not for my argument;" for doubtless in his day, as in ours, children often attained to the so-called years of discretion without being able to run alone. A youthful taste must be indulged in its own way, and the influence of superior minds, to mingle works of valuable information with those of more thrilling interest. Thus from criminal trials (and who has not read the Newgate Calendar?) youths may acquire much information of the principles and practice of the laws of their country; trials for murders may lead to trials for treason, and contemporary history; and thence, as the mind matures, they may learn to reflect on the state and progress of society. In short, whatever be the taste of youth, it is better they should read in their own way, with certain obvious exceptions, than not at all. "What?" I may be sure some will say, "is that which ministers to love of excitement and a morbid appetite for subjects which are vain and profitless, and take up time never to be redeemed, is this to be recommended for youth?" No—not

in the abstract, but as a choice, which so commonly presents itself, of manifest evils.

Not long since, in vindicating classical studies and works of sound reading, I happened to allude to novels, and remarked that they were often read for that *foe to piety*—excitement. For a due balance and even tone of mind in just harmony with the spirit of Him whom it is the end and aim of this mortal life, with gracious aid, to imitate, is to be ever regarded in our choice of intellectual recreations; therefore, as certain novels minister to a morbid love of excitement, they tend to destroy this harmony of feeling, and in proportion as they do so, they fall short of the highest order of studies. As this argument was not understood, a lady with a large family addressed me thus: "You object to novels and story books as irreligious, because exciting. I have four very high-spirited, though very excellent sons; if I lock up Robinson Crusoe from my George, and the Waverley novels from the other three, how *am* I to prevent them from turning the whole house out of the window the first wet day, for they *will* read nothing else?" A few days after, a sensible physician told me he had a patient who could digest nothing but lobster salad. Now, said he, men with one idea would starve him first, and plead the rules of their profession afterwards.

So, some who minister to the mind, instead of giving the child childish things, try to force an appetite for serious reading prematurely, and most effectually nip in the bud the slow-growing but healthy plant, which with careful nurture would have borne good fruit in due season.

But do you not know that Sir Walter Scott sometimes treats religious things with too much levity? I will not deny that Sir Walter would himself wish certain things unsaid; but till another author arises to publish a number of volumes which will be really read (for books not read, however good, we cannot count), breathing a spirit equally wholesome and equally in unison with the brotherly love and charity of the Gospel, and at the same time so superior to the novels that were most popular before his day, as well as to those which have been most popular, that is, most read, since,—Sir Walter must be admitted not only to have been, but still to be, one of the greatest benefactors of modern times. Bishop Heber was a great admirer of Scott's works. We learn from his *Journal* that he read *Quentin Durward* on his voyage, and said no other man but Scott could have written it.

Class the first, then, comprises *readers of youthful taste*. Their appetite is for the rare, the dainty, high-seasoned viands. When instructive

subjects are proposed, they soon find "house affairs to draw them thence," and must be amused like Desdemona before they will "seriously incline and with greedy ear devour up my discourse." When one of this class sets down to a book of sterling worth, he looks at his watch, prepares his marker, smooths down the page, knits his brow, turns his back to the window, and begins. The first page is read with great attention, and, perchance, the second: he turns over the third, and, in a few minutes, finds his eyes nearly at the bottom; how they got there he knows not, for his thoughts, he feels, had gone off at a tangent from the top. These truant thoughts are soon recalled, obey for a page and a half, and then are off again—how *remarkable!* Who has not felt this mental phenomenon, and said, "How strange! I was so resolved, I wanted to attend, but my *mind* does so wander." Only consider these two words—"I and my *mind*;" most people think *they* and *their minds* are one and the same thing, but they seem as different as *I* and *my dog*, for the mind and my dog are equally prone to wander in spite of me—equally run off after anything that suddenly breaks upon my path, and evince an equal eagerness to chase anything but what I prepare to pursue. But there is a way to make my dog obey me, change his wandering nature,

down when I say "down," and pass without a glance all game but what I choose to hunt; all this I can do by gradual discipline. Let every man try and resolve to make his mind as tractable as his dog, by the same watchfulness and judicious exercise. He must not be severe with it, nor task it beyond its present powers. The dog will never take the water if you begin by throwing him in—use gentle encouragement, and avail yourself of each earliest indication of maturing strength—so may you continually extend the sphere of activity, improve the nature of mind as well as matter, and promote the readers of class the first to class the second, and, in due course, to class the third, which I will respectively describe.

2. The *second class* of readers consists of those who study biography, or some branch of natural philosophy, who *desire to improve*, and *endure present toil for future profit*. Let us draw a comparison between this and the former class. Tales of excitement cloy—the appetite becomes dull, till the bloodiest of all bloody murders does not make us *creep*—every headless spectre at midnight resolves itself into a shirt and red garters—no giant seems more than a dwarf after the one who had a whole rookery flying out of his beard, and every shipwrecked crew are at once foreseen either to be divided among sharks

and cannibals, or else made more comfortable by some home-bound vessel, than if nothing had happened. Every species of battle, murder, and heroic exploit is soon familiar, and therefore the topics of my first class of readers are easily exhausted. But works of history, of fact not fiction, are ever varied and ever new. They improve the understanding and continually enlarge the sphere of interest. If the first class of students visit the Museums or Galleries of Art, they will saunter about for a few hours, return home, and say, with much composure, "Now they have seen it," as an unanswerable argument against seeing it again. A visitor of this order of intellect accompanied me one day, and the two things which made most impression on his mind were a new bit for a runaway horse and a chair for surgical *operations*. Nothing arrested his attention for a moment but what was already familiar to him. A little patience and exertion of mind, with the courage to confess ignorance and ask questions, would, in many instances, have increased his knowledge of principles, and invested the mysterious wheels in glass cases with all the interest of the patent snaffle. A little exertion did I say? that sounds very easy; but to be strictly honest, I must confess, that to put an ordinary man's senses (so called by courtesy) out of their usual way,

to make them "turn their hand to something they were never brought up to, and does not even run in their family"—this is more easily said than done. A few days after I met a young friend in the Polytechnicon, who had been there day after day; what he sees in the morning is a continual incitement to study natural philosophy in the evening; thus his curiosity is no sooner satisfied than hungry again, and literally "grows by what it feeds on." My second class of readers study on the same principle. Dissertations on taxation and other points of political economy which occasionally occur in history, to some are dry and profitless; but they take the first opportunity of reading an article from a Cyclopædia on this very difficulty, find it far easier to understand than its repulsive name led them to expect, and ever after, when they meet what once only convicted them of ignorance, they eagerly grapple with it, assured of all the pleasures of conscious superiority and improvement. But the third class of readers are of a higher order still: as the first like *fiction* and the second *fact*, so these like *principle*.

3. To examine into *causes* and *consequences* is the highest exercise of the human mind, and attended with the purest pleasure. Fiction delights us for the moment with imaginary scenes, history gives more lasting satisfaction by the

realities of life; but the study of principles or science is like extracting the essence or culling all that is profitable from both, and laying it up in a convenient form to be ever useful, ready, and available. Suppose a man found himself one of many hundred servants in a large factory or house of business, he would naturally desire to know something of the rise, progress, and future prospects of the system in which his own prosperity was involved. Fiction would tell what things *might be*—History would tell what things *had been*—but Science, in investigating the principles of the system, would, by comparing present with past, reveal what things *would be*. Just such a system is the complicated machinery of human society; such servants are its members, and such is the knowledge which the study of principles can impart. Homer's seer was a man deep in principles: "things which were and had been," taught him "things to come."

Again, the subjects of the three classes of readers may be the same, but each reads with a different purpose, gathers a different kind of knowledge, and exercises a different power of the mind. The butterfly flits over the flower-bed and stores up nothing; the spider poison, but the bee honey. So the lover of fiction reads a novel for the excitement and interest of the

story; the lover of history reads the same novel to learn the manners and customs of the day; the lover of science and principles to quicken his observation, and increase his knowledge of the human heart. And this would suggest the remark, that the value of every book, moral or intellectual, depends on the object with which it is read. The same volume may be made to minister to a morbid love of excitement, to increase knowledge of the past, or to aid a noble contemplation of the present or the future. The child pulls off the lid of the kettle for sport, the housewife for use; but young Watts for science, which ended with the discovery of the steam-engine.

Tastes and faculties differ—all are capable of improvement—and with good counsel most persons may learn to prefer the higher to the lower exercise, till the most exalted proves the most delightful, and our pleasures and interests coincide.

I will now proceed to recommend some books for each class respectively. Would that I could ensure that the highest order of works should be preferred, or at least that those of a lower kind should be invested with a pure character by the high purposes which their readers aspired to promote. But to advise readers to study nothing till they feel a taste for works of the

highest character, is like saying "never enter the water till you can swim." To hope to confine ourselves to books pure and unexceptionable, not only in their general tendency, but in every word and sentiment, is like hoping to join in none but the purest and most perfect society. So rigid a rule in a world like this would lead to monkish seclusion and narrowed faculties, with a better name, though worse influence, than intercourse the most unguarded would exert. If we may not read Shakspeare lest we learn improper language, we should not walk in the streets for the same reason; but the body would suffer from want of exercise in the one case, so would the mind in the other.

The first and most numerous class of readers, whose chief object is rather present amusement than future profit, should of course, when two books are equal in interest, make choice of that which is more improving. Therefore one rule for a choice of books is to prefer those which almost all well-informed persons are presumed to know, and which therefore most frequently furnish apt sayings to quote, and positions to illustrate. "Æsop's Fables," the "Arabian Nights," "Robinson Crusoe," most of the "Waverly Novels," and plays of Shakspeare, "Don Quixotte," "Gil Blas," the "Pilgrim's Progress," the "Vicar of Wakefield," and Goldsmith's

"Deserted Village," "Gray's Elegy," are all so commonly alluded to, that not to know them would render us greatly at a loss, almost every time we read a newspaper, enter a picture gallery, or converse with persons of ordinary fertility of mind.

These books serve as a common measure or standard in society for the easy interchange of thought. Quixotic, for instance, is quite a common word. Allusion to vivid scenes and leading principles in these works serves for the transfer of ideas, just as letters of credit for the transfer of money; a knowledge of this circulating medium gives all the facility to conversation, that quoting the rule in "Shelley's case," or "Campbell versus Johnson," gives to an argument in a court of law, because they save explanations as tedious as recurrence to first principles.

To these books add among others the voyages of Captain Cook and Parry, some of Basil Hall's Travels, Voyages to the North Pole and Whale Fishery, Southey's Life of Nelson, Gulliver's Travels, Scott's Tales of a Grandfather, Johnson's Rasselas, Boswell's Life of Johnson, La-
yard's Nineveh and Babylon, etc.

Here is a short, but varied and most comprehensive list for a beginning,—I should say, for *beginning your choice*. They may not all suit

the taste of the same reader, and I freely allow that it is not more pleasing than profitable to enjoy the privilege of laying down a book you do not like and taking up another. More than one of these books has formed the taste—more than one has determined the fortunes—of thousands. “Southey’s *Life of Nelson*,” said an anxious mother, “I have put on the top shelf, out of my boy’s way. His cousin Harry sends home fine accounts of mast-heading, and in windy weather too. All comes of Nelson’s life—the child never thought of going to sea till that book completely turned his head.”

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune.

But Dame Fortune, like other ladies, sometimes smiles and sometimes frowns, and certainly there is a period when the youthful mind is critically poised, when

A breath may make them, as a breath has made,

and marred them too. The nursery game of deciding professions by straws, long and short, or the head of a stem of grass—“tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor, apothecary, thief,”—ridiculously but truly represents the feather-weight which turns the scale of youthful destiny. At this climacteric a book of thrilling and engrossing

interest is really a matter of serious choice. Such a climacteric is observable in the popular as well as the individual character. "The Beggars' Opera" was long prohibited for fear it should encourage pickpockets: another book we could mention, which an officer of Newgate, after contradiction, persisted in saying that Courvoisier told him suggested Lord Russell's murder; and though it has not yet been prohibited, still the evidence of a jail chaplain of Liverpool showed it to be in its form, both of novel and melodrama, a shocking incentive to the rising generation of thieves. Sir David Wilkie's picture, "Distraint for Rent," says Mr. Bulwer, in his "England and the English," remained long unengraved, from an opinion it would inflame popular prejudice against the landed interest. Books suggest thoughts, thoughts become motives, motives prompt to action. Man is a complicated piece of machinery: hundreds of nerves and muscles must act and react for the slightest turn of the body; yet the very wind of a word, a casual hint or association, can set the whole in motion, and produce an action—actions repeated form habits, and determine the character, fixed, firm, and unalterable, for good or for evil. So the delicate hand of a princess can launch a man-of-war, and the voice of a peasant bring down an avalanche.

The reason I am desirous to give a varied list is, because there are few books which suit *every taste*. Gray saw little merit in Johnson's *Rasselas*; and Johnson was equally blind to the beauties of Gray's odes. Burns's very 'popular song, which, he said, was in his best manner, "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled," was thought inferior both by Wordsworth and Mrs. Hemans. Dr. Parr said Sir Walter's popularity would not last. The poems of Ossian, which so many have admired, Johnson thought any man could write when he once hit the strain; and Edmund Burke declared were intended to try English gullibility. Dr. Wolcot, better known as Peter Pindar, ridiculed Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, and maintained, in a most humorous criticism, that it was positively absurd.

While tastes and opinions on literary excellence so far differ among the learned, I may well allow great latitude to the choice of the youthful reader. I heard of a clever Cambridge man who committed to memory the *Antigone* of Sophocles, and by an apt selection of some passages, and ingenious wresting of others, used to bring in a line on all occasions, and with every quotation would expatiate on the art of making a little learning go a long way, and say, that this one play of Sophocles was applicable to all the purposes of life. One of my college

friends, famed rather for sharp wit than sound learning, read one observation in Niebuhr's history the same morning he contested Dean Ireland's scholarship, and had the tact to make this single idea solve three separate questions. A chaplain of Hereford jail has given an account of an old man, seventy years of age, who taught himself to read by comparing the Lord's Prayer, which he had in his memory, with the printed characters in the Prayer Book. Such facts as these are very encouraging. "Bad workmen," says the proverb, "blame their tools." "A few disciplined forces," says Addison, "are more efficient than a much larger number of undisciplined men." A few books may furnish very many ideas or instruments of thought; and only a few ideas well arranged and brought to bear on one point will clear away difficulties which a host of disorderly powers would fail to remove.

Show an unlettered man a book and he will say, "Who can remember all those letters?" Tell him there are but twenty-four—he will still wonder at the words: say that the words, too, are limited in number, and that a knowledge of a system of inflection and composition solves many difficulties, and he will understand that the labors he reckoned by millions exist by tens. As with words so with ideas. In most

books they are few and far between. The distant forest which to the inexperienced botanist, seems to abound in trees, numerous in kind and almost infinite in number, proves as he enters it to contain but one single species, each branching far, with widely expanding limbs and luxuriant foliage, so that the study of one gives a knowledge of all. This uniformity belongs not only to the works of nature but also to the devices of man. The power of recognizing the old and well-known truth in each variety of garb, of stripping it of every accident and ornament, studying it in its simplest form, and then investing and combining it anew, and setting it up in a useful and efficient attitude—this power is one of the most valuable results of human learning, and more to be envied than a memory fraught with the most varied stores of reading. The one possesses, but the other coins. Butler, the author of the *Analogy*, said, "Whoever will in the least attend to the thing will see that it is not the having of knowledge, but the gaining of it, which is the entertainment of the mind." In every part of life the pleasure is in the pursuit, not in the possession. And if

The worth of any thing
Is just as much as it will bring—

in happiness as in money—if that is true of the

end which is said of the means, then I will deny that "a bird in hand is worth two in the bush," and prefer "an estate in expectancy" to one "in possession," though the worldly-wise maintain the contrary. Pursuits of literature are like the chase. Whether we exercise our feet or faculties, mount a hunter or a Pegasus, start a fox or an idea, the fun is over when we have run it down or it has "got to *earth*." The young men in Æsop's fable unconsciously cultivated their vineyard and improved their own strength and industry, while they dug for an imaginary treasure. So many a student is insensibly storing strength while he seeks for knowledge. The classical maxim "to follow nature" is good indeed, when we can discern what nature says and fish up truth from the bottom of the well, or rather sift it from the rubbish, which, while truth was yet upon the surface, ignorance heaped upon it. Still, with all the darkness and difficulties of man's benighted state there is an instinct he may safely obey, and one which, both in physics and metaphysics, science, *falsely so called*, has done much mischief in thwarting. And why is not this monitor obeyed? Men mistake means for ends, and aim at a far less worthy prize than they are inwardly prompted to pursue. This at least is true of my present subject—Study, and Curiosity as its guide. This

instinct urges many a youth to turn over and over the same favorite tale, while a host of the usual advisers cry out "Waste of time,—pray read something new." "And is he to obey curiosity and inclination to this extent?" Why not? a book cannot continue to fix attention unless it continues also either to impart or elicit new ideas. Few signs are more promising than an inclination to read the same book again and again. If the same passages make the same impressions, the book will be laid aside. If they make new impressions, the reader is learning to regard the same scenes at a different angle, or to shift the component parts, till they form, like the same pieces in the kaleidoscope, a variety of pleasing combinations.

A distinguished literary character of the present day was often found in childhood lying on his little bed, where none were likely to seek him, reading Robinson Crusoe. "Only reading Robin—only Robin," was the constant excuse for all absence or idleness, till his friends augured that the future man would be a very different character from one who has done much to preserve the most valuable part of English literature. As a child he was devoted to *one book*. He has since been a man of one book. Shakspeare has been his favorite author. The rest of his reading has been determined by an

ever present desire to correct, illustrate, and restore every trace of that immortal bard. His course of studies being dictated, as we have advised, by his own curiosity and inclination, was peculiar: for instance, at the time of Sir Walter Scott's death, he had not read one of the Waverley Novels; he feared they might divert the current of his thought, and though he had not the narrow views of the mathematician, who laid down Milton, saying, "Why, what does it prove?" he saw that no modern fiction could conduce to the purpose ever foremost in his mind. We cannot too much admire this constancy and fixedness of purpose, especially if we consider how many siren spells and luscious lulling fruits there are to tempt such faithful travellers from their course. "But would he not be afraid of betraying this deficiency in society?" He could find many a precedent to bear him out. Sir James Mackintosh had not read Shakspeare's minor works when forty years of age. Mr. Wilberforce used to say he would read no modern poetry till he was tired of Homer and Milton. Dr. Johnson had not read Othello when he wrote Irene, and visited Iona without seeing Staffa, though the Duke of Wellington went thirty miles out of his march to see Schrivanabalogol, "the big Indian," whom Chantrey said he could beat. However, suffice

it to say, that the reading of this able writer, peculiar as it might seem, answered the purposes of all study, by making him happy in his own resources, agreeable to his friends, and useful to the public.

The reader, whom I venture to term my friend, on reaching this point, may be disposed to ask, "But is there no danger that men of one book, however honorably we hear them mentioned, should be ignorant of every other subject of conversation which does not bear upon their favorite topics?" Certainly the mind requires variety. Those only are deserving either of praise or imitation who are *men of one book*, in this sense, that they pursue one system, choose one class of authors most suitable to their own peculiar talents, and prefer to be sound in a limited sphere, to being superficial in one more extended. I would recommend every young man to make choice of his book—Shakspeare, Milton, Bacon, Clarendon, Burke, Johnson's *Conversations in Boswell*; or, to those of a thoughtful habit, I would say, take Butler's *Analogy and Sermons*, bind them up in one thick volume, on which write WISDOM in gold letters, and begin to read it through every New Year's Day. One sterling author, to call "*my book*," ever most conspicuous and most at hand, read, re-read, "marked and quoted," standing

on the shelf, if "not alone in his glory," at least surrounded with pamphlets, manuscripts, and authors to illustrate it; this will do much to form the mind, to teach us to think as our favorite author thought, to aspire at the same precision of expression, purity of taste, loftiness of views, and fervency of spirit. This will give a high standard of excellence, chastening us with humility, while it fires us with emulation.

If such be the influence of a favorite author, there is both danger and difficulty in the choice. Our dilemma is this: time only can convict us of an erroneous choice, and time forbids our error to be rectified. Yet man's doom and duty both say "persevere." If no prudence will enable us to fix on the most eligible, perseverance may make up the difference. Therefore, whatever author you have fairly chosen after inward communing and patient conference with those you believe best able to advise you, consider you have taken as a bosom companion, for better or for worse, not to be laid aside without some momentous reason. *The one thing needful*, and the Holy Volume, which teaches all things pertaining thereto, must of course be uppermost in the thoughts of all. I shall content myself with observing that one of my fellow-collegians, highly distinguished both at Winchester and Oxford, made the Bible not only the subject of

his serious meditations, but a book to illustrate and a literary resource in his hours of recreation. It was the pride of his mind to be a living index or treasury of Biblical literature.

To exemplify the principle of selection, and to explain how one book may suggest another, I would further observe, whenever we feel unusually entertained with a work, it is natural to inquire the name of the author, and what he has written besides; and though his other compositions bear no very inviting titles, we may still hope that he has made them the vehicle of the same order of ideas. Bishop Berkeley betrayed the same train of thought in his "Thoughts upon Tar Water" as in his "Principles of Human Knowledge." The verses in the celebrated "Pursuits of Literature," which give nearly a page of satirical observations to a line of text, were said by George Steevens to be "mere pegs to hang the notes on." And so at the present day, a book with the name, size, style, and letter-press of a novel, proves to be the insidious form in which science, political or theological, is homœopathically exhibited and disguised.

Defoe wrote besides "Robinson Crusoe" the "History of the Plague of London," in which his fertile imagination, guided and assisted by a few authentic incidents, has placed before our

eyes a series of pictures nearly as vivid as that of Crusoe himself examining the print of the unknown foot upon the sand. You might also be tempted to read Defoe's ghost story of the appearance of Mrs. Veal, prefixed to the second edition of the English translation of "Drelin-court on Death," as also the "Life of Defoe," in Sir W. Scott's prose works, where we have an outline of the story, and the circumstance that led to its fabrication. The first edition of the translation had but an indifferent sale; Defoe ingeniously contrived to render it popular, by prefixing the story of a ghost which appeared and recommended the book; the consequence was that those who had not been persuaded to read Drelincourt by any man living, were yet persuaded by a recommendation from the dead. Drelincourt's admirable work first drew my attention as I read 'an allusion to the story of Mrs. Veal, in Boswell's Johnson. I therefore added it to a list of "authors characterized and recommended," in which I enter any accidental notice of works of interest, as I shall presently describe.

But I think I hear some impetuous reader say, "Why tell us where to find ghost stories? Proceed at once to things worth knowing." This is precisely the point to which I wish to show that subjects the most trivial may be

made to tend: I was going to observe that Dr. Johnson, like every one else till a comparatively recent time, was ignorant that this story of Mrs. Veal was a fiction, and said, "I believe the woman declared on her death-bed it was a lie." So a fabricated story had a fabricated contradiction.

Does this supply no lesson as to the *credulity of man*, and the *uncertainty of human testimony*, two topics well worthy of a man of reflection to illustrate? What can be more requisite as a foundation of all learning than a clear knowledge of the extent to which human testimony has erred; and how far favor, affection, association, prejudice, and passions of all kinds render man liable to yield too ready and too general an assent to partial evidence? Let this subject be pursued by readers of a speculative turn, and even from common stories and anecdotes they will derive no less profit than entertainment. Consider the extraordinary impositions which have been practised in literature, and the controversies to which they have led—that of Lauder, for instance, in 1747, who by an essay in the "Gentleman's Magazine," tried to prove that Milton had borrowed from Latin authors of modern date, and actually imposed on a great many scholars before he was detected by Douglas, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, who

showed that passages which Lauder pretended to have found in the poems of Massenius and others, were really taken from Hog's Latin translation of *Paradise Lost*. Dr. Johnson was so far deceived as to write a preface and postscript to Lauder's work. An account of this may be found in Nichols' "*Literary Anecdotes of the 18th Century*," a work to be read while *inclination* lasts and no longer. This limit should be particularly observed with all books of anecdotes, miscellany, and the multifarious reading which biography supplies. It must not be supposed that mere dipping into a chapter here and there will convey all the advantages of sound study: only, after gleaning all that interests at one time the rest may be reserved for an occasion of more extended curiosity. I do not like to hear a man say of *Rasselas*, or the *Vicar of Wakefield*, "it is a work of genius, but I have not read it since I was young." The second reading of a good book is often more profitable than the first.

"But can there be any use in reading old things over again?" Certainly not, things really old. But the same truth has many meanings: it has one voice for the wise—another for the unwise: it pleases the vacant mind by the knowledge it imparts, it pleases the full and fertile mind by the force it gathers from numerous associations,

and by the new ideas it elicits, and making mere shadowy impressions distinct; so a good book, a book true to nature, whatever part of nature's works it describes, may be ever new, so long at least as our own minds continue to collect new strength to evolve, and new images to combine.

But to return to the topic of *human testimony*, we might read the "Confessions of Ireland," who, as Malone was speculating on undiscovered MSS. of Shakspeare, forged "miscellaneous papers and legal instruments, under the hand and seal of William Shakspeare;" also "Vortigern," a play, which he pretended was written by Shakspeare, and which was actually performed at Sheridan's theatre, and only condemned by the double meaning which Kemble's sneer gave the line—

And when this solemn mockery is o'er.

Many in the literary circles were deceived. Dr. Parr acknowledged "the forgery beat him." Warton was extravagant enough to say, of a prayer which was also among the forgeries, though written off-hand by Ireland when only seventeen years of age, that it surpassed in sublimity any part of the Liturgy in the Book of Common Prayer!

I can only allude to Chatterton, who imposed

on many literary persons by forging poems, and ancient records and title-deeds, which he pretended were found in St. Mary Redcliffe Church at Bristol. Horace Walpole, with the help of Gray and Mason, detected the forgery; but Walpole's letter to Chatterton proved he had been deceived. Afterwards a line of Hudibras was discovered among this ancient poetry;—still considering this deception was practised at the age of sixteen, and that the poetry is of a high order, Dix's "Life of Chatterton" is a work of painful interest. Dr. Johnson said, in his peculiarly emphatic style, "It is wonderful how the young whelp could have done it."

Again, George Psalmanazar, born 1679, in the south of France, pretended to be a heathen native of the island of Formosa, and invented a new language, which he called the Formosan, and into which he had the boldness to translate the "Church Catechism." This remained long undetected by the learned, while his "History of Formosa" passed through two editions. His "Autobiography" is deserving of credit. Johnson said, "I scarcely ever sought the society of any one, but of Psalmanazar the most. I used to find him in an ale-house in the city: latterly he lived as a very good man, and died a sincere Christian:—his 'Autobiography' was a penitential confession."

On the same topic of the *strength and weakness of the human mind*, we may mention the controversies about Homer, "Epistles of Phalaris," Ossian, Junius, Chevalier D'Eon, Man with the Iron Mask, "Voyages of Dambrerger," Eliza Canning, Johannah Southcote, Mary Tophts of Godalming, the Cock-lane Ghost, and Jugglers' Feats, as related by Eastern travellers. If any person entertains curiosity in these matters, "Sketches of Imposture and Credulity," in the "Family Library," and Sir Walter Scott's "Demonology and Witchcraft," will supply abundant interest.

"But surely this is a strange selection." I do not name these subjects to the exclusion of others, but principally to show that a youthful taste indulged in its own caprices will involuntarily lead to a kind of knowledge available in the season of a maturer judgment. The preceding observations will also show the advantage of always bearing in mind one useful subject, which every hour of reading and reflection may contribute to illustrate. Every mind has a host of wandering thoughts, which unbidden come, and unregarded go, only because they want a ready standard round which to rally.

A subject like that of Abercrombie, "On the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation

of Truth," would surely be a laudable employment for the talents of the greatest genius; and would not this course of reading, childish as it may seem, supply facts too valuable to lose? How often have some of these cases of deception been cited by the avowed enemies of the Gospel! Who can say that he may not feel himself called upon to give the same serious attention to the history of these impostors, as Paley, in his "Evidences of Christianity," has given to the impostor *Mohammed*, and for the same purpose?

Here, gentle reader, let me remind you that from "Robinson Crusoe" I have wandered to the "Evidences of Revealed Religion;" and though I did not see the point at which I should arrive, I felt confident of eventually showing that, with curiosity or inclination as your guide, your route will afford you no less profit than interest, whatever be the point from which you please to start. The ever-recurring questions, "Where is the use of this?" or "the good of that?" may well be met with the reply, that many things are eventually useful, though not immediately convertible, and that prudent housekeepers say, "Keep a thing three years, and you'll find a use for it." But I must be careful not to give up a commanding position, because it is convenient to meet a feeble enemy

on lower grounds. Let us, therefore, remember that a well-stored mind to which, as Herschel says, "a thousand questions are continually arising, a thousand subjects of inquiry presenting themselves, which keep his faculties in constant exercise, and his thoughts perpetually on the wing, so that lassitude is excluded from life, and that craving after artificial excitement and dissipation of mind, which leads so many into frivolous, unworthy, and destructive pursuits, is altogether eradicated from the bosom;" in such a mind, there is *a use*, indeed: there must therefore be *some good* in whatever reading conduces to form it. This argument, I say, asserting not the sordid money reckoning of the hireling but the enlarged estimation of the Christian, who values literature as it lessens the temptations of earth, and leads to heavenly things; this is the true and impregnable ground of defence against the sneers of the friends of so-called utility and expediency; still, as we exult in foiling insignificant cavillers, not only on our grounds but on their own, I would ask them, if they would have seen *the use* of Newton's pondering over a falling apple; and yet it raised his thoughts to the laws which govern the revolution of the planets in their orbits. Would they not have joined in the ridicule of *swing-swangs*, which did not prevent Robert

Hooke from reviving the proposal of the pendulum as a standard of measure since so admirably wrought into practice, as Herschel remarks, by the genius and perseverance of Captain Kater? Would they not have joined in the laugh at Boyle in his experiments on the pressure and elasticity of air, and asked Watt, as I before mentioned, *the use* of playing with the kettle, and yet all can see *the good* of the steam engine? Then think of blowing soap bubbles, by which the phenomena of colors has been studied; to say nothing of where could be *the good* of playing with whirligigs, the simple means by which, a few years since, a society of philosophers were investigating certain principles of optics, as exemplified in the clever toy called the Magic Disk. A scientific friend (an F. R. S.), a short time since, intent on geological discovery, sat down one sultry day, with a hammer, to break stones by the road-side. A fellow-laborer, employed by the parish, looked on with amazement, till he saw some fossils selected from the heap, and then said, "Then, sir, I suppose they give you something for them?" "No," said my friend, "they don't." "Then, what can be the good of them?" This poor fellow was quite as enlightened as many intellectual paupers, who, when their money is as low as their wit, may break stones too.

So far I have supposed that a juvenile taste has led my reader through a course of study, which in a note-book, of the kind I shall presently recommend him to keep, would stand thus:—

MEMORANDUM OF READING.

Read "Robinson Crusoe," which suggested "History of the Plague," and "Defoe's Life," by Scott, in which was quoted Defoe's "Preface to Drelincourt," concerning which I consulted Nichols' "Literary Anecdotes."

Mem.—To be read, Nichols, again and again, at future periods.

This specimen of *literary imposition* suggested reading the life of Chatterton; also of Psalmanazar's, Ireland's, and Lauder's forgeries.

The credulity of the wisest men was a topic which made me curious to read "Sketches of Credulity and Imposture," as containing an outline of all notable instances, to which I find so many allusions; and also Scott's "Demonology," which I was told gave a common-sense explanation of supernatural appearances.

Query.—Was Dr. Johnson superstitious?

Mem.—To read more about the doctor.

MEMORANDUM OF KNOWLEDGE.

Learned the extent to which fiction may resemble truth—the fallibility of human judg-

ment—that men of the greatest genius are not above the prejudices of their day. The nature of evidence—the many causes which hinder the investigation of truth. To read about fallacies, human understanding, laws of evidence, blunders and pretensions of critics, with a view to illustrate these topics; to attend to the historical accounts of all popular deceptions, criminal trials, &c.

- Memoranda, such as these, are recommended as aids to reflection, and to teach how to digest all the knowledge we acquire. “Heaping up information,” says an excellent writer, “however valuable of itself, requires the principle of combination to make it useful. Stones and bricks are valuable things, very valuable; but they are not beautiful or useful till the hand of the architect has given them a form, and the cement of the bricklayer knit them together.”

Let us now take, from the list assigned to the first class of readers, a second book, that we may see how the same method and principle of combining and digesting applies to other amusing subjects. Consider the “Travels” of Captain Basil Hall. His third series gives a brief but clear outline of the History of India, from the year 1497, in which the Portuguese discovered the route by the Cape; the formation

of the East India Company; war with the French; the Black Hole of Calcutta; Lord Clive; Hyder Ali; Warren Hastings; an interesting account of the system on which British India is governed; Tippoo Saib; Cornwallis; Wellesley; writers and cadets; a most interesting account of Bombay and the wonders of Elephanta (Series ii. vol. iii.), and Ceylon; the stupendous labor of making Candelay Lake; the voluntary tortures of the superstitious Sunnyasses; how widow burning was abolished; the immense tanks; the "big Indian" Shrivanabalagol, a statue seventy feet high, cut out of a hill of granite; descriptions of canoes, and inventions, strange habits, and customs of a variety of nations. After reading these interesting volumes, and following the course which I should suppose your inclination would suggest, your note-book would bear, as I judge from my own, the following:—

MEMORANDUM OF READING.

Read Basil Hall's "Travels;" mention of Warren Hastings; suggested to read a few pages of Miller's "George III.," about the impeachment of Hastings; Burke's "Speeches," recommended on the same subject, and Nabob of Arcott—read both. To see more of the meaning of "Charter" and "Company." H.

W. promised me that five minutes' reading in my Cyclopædia would inform me; also that I might find the same by the index to Blackstone's "Commentaries;" found much more in Blackstone; also "India" in Cyclopædia, and had a general view of the whole subject. Must observe Daniell's Indian drawings as very near reality. H. W. says the Museum, at the India House in Leadenhall Street, and the Naval and Military Museum, near Whitehall, must be visited. Rev. W. Ward's book on the "Literature and Customs of the Hindoos," recommended; also Sir W. Jones's "Letters"—picked out a great deal from both; also from Robertson's "Ancient India," showing what was known to the ancients about India, and about Phœnicians: advised to read Ezekiel, c. xxviii.; very curious—about ancient commerce and navigation—Tarshish, Ophir, Elath, and Eziongeber, Palmyra, Arabians, Genoese, and Venetians.

MEMORANDUM OF KNOWLEDGE.

Feel more confidence, as well as curiosity, about India. Can converse with and draw out my Indian friends to advantage. Know more about the ingenuity and power of man. Must compare pyramids, railways, and Indian tanks. Did not know there was so much curious

knowledge in O. T. Begin to observe the natural productions, customs, &c., of the Book of Job. Read some of the "Scripture Herbalist" about the plants and trees; also looked into "Natural History of the Bible:" surprised at finding so many curious things which never struck me before. Herschel's proof (Nat. Phil. p. 61) of the insignificance of the labor which raised the great pyramid, compared with the weekly expense of steam power in our founderies.

A COURSE
OF
ENGLISH READING.

PART II.

IN WHICH VARIOUS COURSES OF READING ARE PROPOSED
AND CHARACTERIZED.

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CHAPTER I.

ENCOURAGEMENTS TO STUDY AND READING.

I SHOULD now consider that I had given my class of readers their full share of attention, were it not that, profiting by the example of Molière, who used to judge of the probable success of his comedies by the degree they excited the risible faculties of his old house-keeper, I read these pages to one of the young friends for whose use they are designed, and was told, "that it is not so easy to find the answers to the various questions which we should like to ask in reading travels; for too many authors assume that what is familiar to themselves is familiar to their readers."

This remark leads me to give some general notions as to the use of Cyclopædias, Gazetteers, Biographical Dictionaries, and other books of reference.

We just mentioned India; East India Company; Clive; Hastings; Cornwallis; Wellesley; writers; cadets. On each of these heads you

may consult the "Penny Cyclopædia," which excels all others in the variety of its subjects. You can read each article, more or less attentively, according to the degree of interest which casual notices of those topics in books or conversation have excited. When you have read them all, cast your eye again over the article on India, and you will feel that the several parts of your newly-acquired knowledge have a propensity to "fall in," as the drill sergeants say, and find their proper places in the main line which this sketch of Indian history has marked out. And probably allusions to Tippoo Saib, Hyder Ali, Brahmins, Buddhism, Caste, and other subjects, will lead you to read the separate articles upon these topics also, and I will venture to promise you will rise from your studies with feelings of considerable satisfaction.

Having once mustered courage to plunge into the ocean of learning, if you cannot swim at first, you will acquire a sense of your own buoyancy, and more easily resolve to try again. When the splashing and floundering is over for the first time, you will feel some confidence in society, and listen to catch a hint from the greater advancements of others. Many a boy would never have learned to swim had it not been for some companions who tempted him just to try one dip. Many a man would have

gone through a whole life subject to that creeping sense of inferiority, which is the every-day punishment of ignorance, had not some reading companions led him to take the first step, which carried him so much further than he expected, that he was emboldened to try a second, and at length to join the busy throng, in which powers unknown, because untried, made him firm and foremost.

With this beginning in Indian history, take another Cyclopædia, the "Britannica," or "Metropolitana," or "Americana," and look out for the same articles. Then look for India in a Gazetteer, and the names of men in a Biographical Dictionary:* to the end of these articles are usually added the names of authors from whom more information may be derived. By this method you may soon make an extensive collection of facts. I say of *facts*, for sound, mature, well-digested *knowledge* is not the growth of a day: facts to the mind are like food to the body; digestion and strength depend on the constitution, mental or physical.

After reading long histories, or lives of distinguished characters, most young readers find

* A really good Biographical Dictionary of convenient size is yet a desideratum. Mr. Putnam's "Cyclopædia of Biography," edited by Godwin, or Dr. Blake's "Biographical Dictionary," will answer for all ordinary purposes.—AM. ED.

that they rise with a knowledge more confused than accurate, and that even certain plain and obvious questions, such as the age at which certain men attained celebrity; at what times particular changes happened; what circumstances led to certain events, and other things of interest, escape observation, from the many pages among which the required information is interspersed. These the compendious articles of a Cyclopædia, or Biographical Dictionary, are peculiarly suited to supply; to prevent wandering thoughts, and losing the thread of the subject, I find it useful to read a short outline before I commence a life in two or three volumes. Also, for the most part, I keep books of reference at hand, and turn at once to the name of any unknown person introduced.

Again, magazines and reviews often contain concise accounts of campaigns, political questions, and the present policy and interests of different nations. Some allowance may be made for the political bias of reviewers; still they are as likely to be fair in their opinions, and accurate in their facts, as other authors. Nor must we forget, that, with the exception of novels, magazines are now nearly the only channel by which an author can publish his opinions with the least prospect of remuneration; and therefore it is not too much to say,

that a store of facts, and series of reflections, which would have made a plausible appearance in two volumes octavo, are often cut down to the length of a single essay in the "Edinburgh," or "Quarterly," or "North American," and gain no little vigor from the pruning. The chief value of the magazines is, that they give us the benefit of early information. Bacon says, that "reading makes the full man, and conversation the ready man;" and Johnson says of conversation, that it supplies only scraps, and that we must read books to learn a whole subject: then Bacon goes on to say, that "writing makes the exact man." The *digesting* and *arrangement* of knowledge are two points which should never be lost sight of by the literary adviser: so, while I would urge the advice of Bacon to the letter, and encourage the more practised student with the old maxim, *nulla dies sine linea* (no day without a line), I would further observe, that the use of a short compendium will tend to that habit of exactness which writing more fully promotes.

Besides cyclopædias, gazetteers, biographical dictionaries, and magazines, there are many other works furnished like the magazines with indices, and readily available as books of reference. I have already mentioned Blackstone's "Commentaries," which, though I cannot speak

of it as a work of general interest to the young, contains, as a glance at its index will show, many things to solve questions which arise in the study of history. Chancellor Kent's and Justice Story's Commentaries are equally worthy of being consulted. Again, biographies are good books of reference—about the Reformation, the lives of Wiclif, Luther, Cranmer, Jewel, Knox, Calvin; about the Methodists, Southey's "Life of Wesley;" or Whitehead's Wesley; about the question of slavery in the West Indies, "The Life of Wilberforce;" about military matters, the lives of Marlborough, Wellington, Napoleon, Washington, Taylor, Scott, &c.; about naval affairs, Rodney, Earl St. Vincent, Nelson, Perry, Decatur, Bainbridge, &c.—severally contain much information, to which an index or table of contents will direct. You have only to inquire what celebrated men are connected with the matter in question, or were contemporaneous with given events, and you will generally find that their biographies contain their opinions, together with such explanation or history of the subject as is requisite to make those opinions understood. Of all biographies none is more valuable as a book of reference for a particular period, than Boswell's "Life of Johnson." During the middle of the last century, nearly every con-

spicuous character, or memorable incident of that and of many preceding ages, passed successively in review before the severe judgment of him, who was confessedly one of the wisest of men, and has been faithfully recorded by a biographer, of whom a writer in the "Quarterly" has truly said, "It is scarcely more practicable to find another Boswell than another Johnson."

As to finding out allusions, avoiding confusion, and solving other difficulties incidental to study, I have now said enough. But all methods must give place to those to which each person is prompted by a sense of his own deficiencies. Read with all courage and confidence; though you wander from your path for a time, you will have the more pleasure in finding your way at last. If you cannot remember all you read, you will remember the sources of information for another day. The next thing to knowing the contents of a book, is knowing the use of it.

One of my young friends again asks, "Does all my learning go for nothing? I have read many books, but know none accurately; still I feel a degree of confidence when their contents are the subjects of conversation." Certainly not for nothing: this confidence is worth something; you have gained at least the habit of

reading : if you stop where you are, knowledge without accuracy is like an estate encumbered with debt and subject to deductions. But it is fair to hope, on striking a balance, something will remain ; or, even if bankrupt quite, it is well to have, as they say in the mercantile world, a good connection and habits of business ; in other words, a general acquaintance with authors, and all the stores they can severally supply, and also habits of application to begin again with greater advantage. So I would console my very many young friends who are in this predicament with the assurance, that they have probably made a useful survey for future operations, and worn down so many rough edges, that, in retracing their former steps, they will have more time to look out for objects of interest, and fewer obstacles to daunt their energies.

Although the first glance at the following pages might lead my readers to think I intended to imitate Dufresnoy, who, after laying down a course of historical study, mildly added, "the time required is ten years ;" yet be it remembered that I stipulate for no length of labor : I only request that you will employ your usual hours of reading, few or many, with the method here proposed, and on such subjects as suit the peculiar bent of your inclination. Thus in one

Year you may achieve more than nineteen out of twenty of your neighbors achieve in ten ; for at least that proportion of the community read without any system or definite object in view, but carry on a desultory campaign like that of the Greeks around Troy, who, as Thucydides says, were foraging when they ought to have been fighting, or there would have been no ten years' siege. "Divide and conquer," is a maxim in one sense wise, in another foolish. Victory depends on dividing, and choosing one point of attack, and then concentrating all our powers upon it ; therefore the following chapters contain many subjects, and each subject several divisions, that every reader may select according to his taste. On each division, works are recommended requiring different degrees of industry and talent, to suit every capacity ; and, again, the works are so chosen and arranged, and accompanied with such explanations, that every hour expended shall bring its hour's worth. "The many-aproned sons of mechanical life," of whom Burns speaks, may spend their Saturday evenings according to these directions, and learn something complete, with a beginning, middle, and end, in full assurance that when they have more leisure time they may go on adding and enlarging, without pulling any of their work to pieces. The university

student will find standard works, and a course of reading, sanctioned by the spirit, if not the letter, of the first judges of literary labor: in twelve hours a week stolen from his ethics or differential calculus, he may attain a considerable accession of that kind of knowledge which will save him from the shame of being a mere scholar, deep in the past and ignorant of the present; of that knowledge, too, which he could not forego without positive prejudice to his advancement in any career of public life.

I have not the slightest fear that any student worthy the name will abandon the course of reading here recommended when once he has fairly tried it. Indeed, the first step is all I ask. A clergyman of my acquaintance chanced, some years since, to take up a little book on Astronomy: from this, as a centre, the rays of his curiosity shot forth on all sides: and he is now a man of great scientific attainments.

Reader, *try one book*. Many a man who at first felt as much diffidence of his own capacities as you can feel, and argued, "Where is the use of *my* reading? what will the little that *I* can do be worth?" has found a first book lead to a second, and a second to a third, and he has been thankful for the friendly hint which prompted his earliest efforts.

One of my most intimate friends was induced

to study Grecian history on the principle here recommended of beginning with an outline, and filling in by degrees. Encouraged by his unexpected progress, he has since, by the same method, attained a considerable knowledge of numerous subjects.

Reader, *study one subject well*. Did you never hear the remark, "How strange this man, so profound in his favorite science, should find time for so much else besides!" The habits of attention, method, reflection, and analysis formed in exhausting one of the subjects, will invest others with such attractions that, even in their deepest parts, they may rivet attention in spite of the fireside prattle, and fill up any spare five minutes while the cloth is being laid, or the tea drawing.

After what I have said in the First Part it does not seem necessary to enlarge on these matters here. I shall now, rather, ask you to take up the study of History, which I propose to consider under the following divisions:—

History	{	Modern	{	of the United States, of Great Britain, of the Continent, of British India,
		Ancient	{	of Rome, of Greece, of the Egyptians, Persians, and other ancient nations.

First, let us suppose you decide on a branch of modern history, and would begin with the history of your own country.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THIS I regard as of prime importance to every American, and he ought to be perfectly at home here if any where. The number of years over which the history extends is not very great, the divisions and periods are readily marked off and characteristic, the materials for obtaining accurate information are quite abundant and satisfactory, and the interesting incidents of every description are unsurpassed by those in the history of any country in the world. Consider it a point of honor, whatever other history you read or study, to be *master* of that of your own country. You can readily do it if you will take the trouble; and I assure you that if you do take the needful trouble, you will be well repaid for all your labor.

I would advise you to form as clear an idea as you can of the whole field before you begin to study into particulars, or endeavor to satisfy

yourself on special portions. Beside the *general* and natural divisions of the history of our country into Colonial History, History of the Revolution, and History of the United States under the Federal Constitution, you will find it convenient to subdivide somewhat in this way:—

1. Discovery of America; Northmen; Voyages of Columbus, Vespuccius, Cabot, &c.
2. Settlement of the Colonies.
3. Causes which led to the Revolt of the Colonies; Declaration of Independence.
4. Revolutionary War.
5. Administration of Washington.
6. Administrations of his successors to the end of the Sixteenth Congress (1820); War of 1812; Missouri Compromise.
7. Administrations since that of Monroe; War with Mexico; Acquisition of California.

Begin with a compendious history, like Hale's, Goodrich's, Willson's, or Willard's School History. Endeavor to arrange the necessary dates and prominent facts in your mind, according to some system which you may adopt, so that you can be *sure* of them at every stage of your progress. Make an Outline History for yourself, if you choose and have the patience, or draw carefully a Historical Tree for use in filling up hereafter. Then take any period you feel most interested in, and fill up your outline to any

extent you desire, or add leaves and branches to your Historical Tree. You can either begin and go through a chronological study of History from the earliest period down to the present time, or you can read and study, as inclination prompts, about those particular parts of American History which you may think most interesting and valuable.

One thing you must let me advise you ; don't undertake too much at a time. You can do wonders by system, by division of labor, by studying with attention and when you are fully alive and interested ; otherwise you will not make the progress you desire, and which is entirely within your reach.

As to books ; when you have mastered some compendium or outline, then you may find profit in consulting the following works on American History, which are named because of their high character and the fullness with which they have treated the subject.

Irving's "Life and Voyages of Columbus ;"

Prescott's "Ferdinand and Isabella ;"

Wheaton's "History of the Northmen ;"

Graham's "History of the United States from the planting of the British Colonies to their Assumption of Independence ;"

Botta's "War of American Independence ;"

Bancroft's "History of the United States ;"

Hildreth's "History of the United States."

Of course it is not expected that you will undertake to read or study the whole of each of these elaborate works; I mention them as the standard authorities, and as the sources whence you may draw information, on any of the topics alluded to on p. 122.

In connection with these larger works read Marshall's or Sparks's Life of Washington; Wirt's Patrick Henry; Life of Alexander Hamilton, by his son; Life of Jefferson; Life of John Jay; Life of Franklin, by Sparks; Kennedy's Life of Wirt; Garland's Life of John Randolph; Life of Henry Clay, of Daniel Webster, of J. C. Calhoun; Lives of Eminent Men celebrated in American History (3 vols. 12mo.), as Stark, Fulton, Cabot, Hudson, Putnam, Wayne, Montgomery, and others; Sparks's Series of American Biography (25 vols. 12mo.).

Read also Parkman's "Conspiracy of Pontiac;" Irving's "Conquest of Florida;" O'Callahan's New York; Brodhead's History of New York; Belknap's New Hampshire; Williams's Vermont; Ramsay's South Carolina; Marbois's Louisiana; and other State Histories, and Historical Collections, which may fall in your way.

Also, consult Ingersoll's War of 1812, and Mr. Headley's book on the same period; Major Ripley's "War in Mexico;" Life of General

Taylor; Cooper's Naval History; Henry's Campaign Sketches of the War in Mexico; &c.

When you have satisfied yourself with examining or studying these works, you can readily guide your future course by the solid information you will have acquired respecting the history, progress, and present condition of our great and highly-favored country.*

* As Mr. Pycroft has taken occasion, when treating of the study of English History, to enlarge considerably upon the general principles which should guide the student in his choice of particular periods or portions of history for *very thorough study*, I beg leave to refer the reader to his remarks on pp. 128, 129; *mutatis mutandis*, what is there said will apply to the study of American as well as English History. It will also help to excuse the meagreness of the present chapter which I have ventured to insert in this place.—

Ed.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE STUDY OF ENGLISH HISTORY.

THE first step, as I have before observed, is to read some History of England through. A man of mature and disciplined mind, long used to laborious application, should read one of the larger and more elaborate histories, as Hume and Smollett's, continued to the present time; or Hallam's; or Turner's; or the Pictorial History of England; &c. But this is not to be expected of more than a few.

The outline History of England by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in 140 clear, lively, duodecimo pages, is suited for every man, woman, and child.* Even the hard-headed scholar will find this outline useful to give a comprehensive view of the whole. Only let him not stop here. Keightley's History, in 2 vols. duodecimo, or Sir J. Mackintosh's, or Goldsmith's, may be read next. It will be easier still, to read the little History again as far as

* See note, p. 23.

Henry VII., and the rest in Keightley: next, read in Hume any reign, war, or negotiation, which excites your curiosity, and so strengthen the stem of your tree, as before explained, as much as you please. That you may have the satisfaction of tracing its gradual growth, make a memorandum on the simple drawing by which this tree is represented, just as the works of Rapin, Lingard, and other narrators of the same events are wholly, or partially, read to combat or corroborate the views of Hume.

So far then you have been instructed how to gain a more or less substantial *outline* of English history. To strengthen your mental powers, and to multiply your literary stores, so far as to be invincible at every point of so long a line, is not much more easy to effect or more judicious to attempt, than to man the wall of China. Like a good general, be content to concentrate your forces—to “divide” off and “conquer,” first one part, and then another. You may be agreeably surprised by finding that the intermediate parts, when left by themselves, are less formidable than they appear, and readily give way as you become a more practised assailant. Consider that so far you have reconnoitred the general face of the country: the next thing is to *select one portion for a more searching and minute examination.*

The leading principles on which you should choose a portion of history to be made a strong point for deep study are:—

First, to be guided by your own taste and curiosity: to sail into the wide ocean of truth, go with the current of your nature.

Secondly, to choose, according to your own necessities, whatever will be useful in business or give you confidence in society. As a general rule, read what others read. Conversation is often more improving than books; therefore, read to profit by conversation. If you would be improved by a visit to France, you must learn French; if by a visit to England, you must learn something about our mother country; if by joining any particular society, whether of men of business, men of science, or men of literature, you must study, if not the language, at least the thoughts and topics of such society. You will otherwise feel as much out of your element as a sheriff's chaplain when dining with the judge on his circuit.

Thirdly, to read subjects which afford most matter for reflection. To be wise is both the surest and most profitable way to seem wise. Read those subjects which involve most principles. Principles are the most handy, convertible, portable, and prolific of all species of literary property; therefore,

Fourthly, read one good comprehensive account of a revolution, protracted war, or other ever-recurring phenomena of human society. Then, *ex uno disce omnia*, that is, gain so intimate a knowledge of one that you may anticipate the chief characteristics of all. This was the secret of Edmund Burke's attainments. His letter to Lord Charlemont at the commencement of the French Revolution, is considered to evince almost the power of prophecy. Niebuhr had so deeply studied Roman history, that he ventured to assert, after a lapse of about 2000 years, an opinion of the early constitution of Rome in direct contradiction to classical authorities. By the recovery of some lost books of Cicero de Republicâ, his conclusion was proved correct. One of my friends was assured by Niebuhr, that before he had read the summary of a lost decade of Livy, he wrote down the substance of what it contained. Another illustration of how far a little good intellectual coin may be made to go, is afforded by Gibbon, chap. xxxi., in which he conjectures the history of the unrecorded years between the withdrawing of the Romans from Britain and the descent of the Saxons.

These are the leading principles on which you should select "a strong point" in history; and on which I have selected, by way of exam-

ple and illustration, the following portions:—

1st, The early history till about the time of the Conquest.

2dly, The era of the middle ages, including the feudal system, chivalry, and the crusades.

3dly, The beginning of modern history, marked by the art of printing, the use of gunpowder and the compass, the discovery of America, and the development of the colonial system.

4thly, The civil wars.

5thly, The Revolution of 1688.

6thly, From the accession of George III. to the present time.

I will now consider these eras separately, and point out a course of reading upon each: and,

First, ON EARLY ENGLISH HISTORY. This portion will afford amusement to one fond of antiquities—would constitute a good preparation for any university-student going to the bar, but is only to be recommended to those of mature understanding.

Now, reader, what is your object? If you only wish to thicken and strengthen the lower part of your historical tree by other outlines of early history to run parallel with those already laid down, read a short sketch in Tytler's "Universal History," also "The Romans in Britain," and "The Anglo-Saxons," forming

one volume of the "Family Library : " to which the more voluminous reader may either add or prefer Sir F. Palgrave's, or Turner's " History of the Anglo-Saxons," or, which is the shortest of all, Hume's " Appendix on the Anglo-Saxon Government ; " besides, or instead of all these, read Mackintosh's " History of England," on this period. The very profound inquirer may also refer to the authorities quoted in the foot- notes. " Chalmer's Caledonia," treating of the Roman period, is recommended in Professor Smyth's lectures,—lectures well worthy the attention of every reader of modern history.* On the Roman period read also Tacitus's *Agri- cola* ; Murphy's translation was recommended by Edmund Burke, as one of the best in our language. There are also translations of Cæsar and Suetonius, which should be consulted. Dr. Smyth remarks that Gibbon, c. xxxi., sup- plies by ingenious conjecture the history of the years between 400 and 449. On the Druids, read the account in " Cæsar ; " also a concise history in Southey's " Book of the Church."

* The valuable "Lectures on Modern History," by Dr. Wm. Smyth, have been republished in the United States, under the editorial care of Dr. Jared Sparks, 2 vols. 8vo. I would also beg leave to recommend to the reader Dr. Arnold's "Lectures on Modern History," as well worthy attentive perusal.—AM. ED.

For the progress of religion in those early times, read Southey, Churton, Lingard, Mosheim, Milner; a few pages in each. All the reasons for believing St. Paul came to Britain, and the first promulgation of the Gospel, is given in "Peranzabuloë," an interesting account of an ancient church found buried in the sand on the coast of Cornwall. Tytler recommends Carte's "History," vol. i. b. iv. § 18, as containing an admirable account of Alfred the Great. The "Encyclopædia Britannica," "Metropolitana," Rees's and the "Penny Cyclopædia," (which I shall quote as "the Cyclopædias,") also contain comprehensive articles on Anglo-Saxons, Alfred, Bede, Druids. Those who have access to Camden's "Britannia," to which many of the authors already recommended are greatly indebted, may satisfy the most eager curiosity. Camden, in 1582, travelled through the eastern and northern counties of England to survey the country and arrange a correspondence for the supply of further information. His "Remains" of a greater work on Britain was published 1605. Camden's reign of Elizabeth is recommended by Hume, as one of the best compositions of any English historian. Leland's "Itinerary" is also recommended to the curious. Camden made great use of it. In the reign of Henry VII.

Leland was empowered by a commission under the Great Seal to search for objects of antiquity in the archives and libraries of all cathedrals, abbeys, priories, &c., and spent six years in collecting materials for the "Archæology of England and Wales."

I limit my recommendations as much as possible to books which may be easily procured. Many other works, quite as instructive as the preceding, I omit, because any reader who attends to these directions may, by a little inquiry, ascertain the value of every work within his reach. Almost all of the above works give their authorities, and contain incidental remarks on the sources from which more extensive information may be derived.

To those who have a real love of learning let me observe, that Ingulphus, secretary to William I., wrote the "History of the Monastery of Croyland," with many particulars of the English kings from 664 to 1091. William of Malmesbury wrote most laudably, as he said, "not to show his learning, but to bring to light things covered with the rubbish of antiquity," a history of Old England from 449 to 1126; also a Church History and Life of St. Aldhelm. The venerable Bede, early in the eighth century, wrote an Ecclesiastical History by aid of correspondence, when there was no penny post.

age, with all the monasteries in the heptarchy! All these works have been under the hand of the compiler and the spoiler, that is, as Bacon would say, the moths have been at them; but away with these dilutions and drink at the fountain.

The second portion of English history worthy of deep study is what is commonly reckoned

THE MIDDLE AGES. This comprehends the Feudal System, Chivalry, and the Crusades.

This era may be also profitably selected by university students and men of liberal education. A knowledge of the feudal system is of the first importance. Chivalry and the crusades must be examined more particularly in respect of their causes and effects on civilization.

On *the Feudal System* read a chapter in Blackstone's Commentaries, voi. i.; also Tytler, b. vi. c. 2.; and Hume's second Appendix; also Hallam's Middle Ages. Dr. Smyth strongly recommends the account in Stewart's View of Society. Bacon's Henry VII. I can strongly recommend; also part of Montesquieu. My readers must not take fright at seeing so many books on the same subject. Most of my references are only to a few pages out of several volumes, and these easily found by an index or summary. Learn the facts and arguments of

one treatise *thoroughly* during hours of study, and the rest will be easy enough for "hours of idleness." No light reading rivets attention so much as dissertations on those topics about which study has excited a spirit of inquiry.

On *Chivalry*, as well as the feudal system and the crusades, Hallam's *Middle Ages* is of the first authority. Mill's *History of Chivalry* is much admired. The very popular author, Mr. James, has written the *History of Chivalry*, as also the lives of Richard I. and the Black Prince, from which much useful information may be derived. These works, as well as Horace Smith's *Tales of the Early Ages*, combine amusement with instruction. On *Chivalry* read also Gibbon, ch. lviii. Of Gibbon let me say once for all, that as a man he is guilty of the meanness of having turned aside from the line of his history to defame Christianity, which he well knew, with all his infidelity, has always been the richest of man's earthly blessings. As a historian, even Niebuhr praised the depth of his research, and the clearness of his views. Blackstone quoted him with respect. The profound learning of his great work, and the sagacity of his conclusions, are indisputable.

Of the *Crusades*, a good short account is given in Tytler's *Universal History*, book vi. c. 9.

Robertson's Introduction to his Charles V., may also be read. The most complete work is undoubtedly Michaud's History of the Crusades, 3 vols. 12mo. If opportunity offer, you may read the articles in the Cyclopædias, or either of them, upon the Feudal System, Chivalry, and the Crusades; and consult, generally, Brande's Dictionary of Science, Literature, and Art.

The third portion of English History to be made a strong point is,—

THE PERIOD OF THE REFORMATION, and the commencement of modern history.

On the *Reformation in England* read Southey's "Book of the Church." Those who have little time may read the small volume on the Reformation in England, by the Rev. J. A. Spencer, D. D., or Rev. I. J. Blunt's 12mo. vol. on the same subject. Consult one or more of the Cyclopædias. Dr. Smyth's "Lecture" is very useful. Lives of the Reformers, as Wiclif, Cranmer, &c., will make a profitable variety. Select also the appropriate parts of Short's "Church History," Milner, and Mosheim. The labor will be less than you would suppose: an accurate knowledge of the narrative of one virtually exhausts the difficulties of all. While these authors give a true Protestant account, Lingard's "History of England" will show

what can be said by a Roman Catholic, and in Hume's "History" you see the subject treated by a man who, caring for neither side, delighted to expose the faults, offences, and crimes of both. Read also Sir J. Mackintosh's "Life of Sir Thomas More," and the same biography in Lord Campbell's "Lives of the Chancellors." Burnet's "History of the Reformation in England" is allowed to be a very full and authentic account. It was written in 1679, at the times described by Sir Walter Scott in "Peveril of the Peak." For the Reformation in Scotland, compare Robertson's and Scott's Scotland. Dr. Smyth strongly recommends Dr. M'Crie's work. Add the life of Knox, and selections from Fox's "Martyrs."

On the *Times of Henry VIII.*, and indeed on every other period, consult Miss Strickland's "Queens," also "The Pictorial History of England," especially for a view of the state of society. Think of the times when more than 70,000 criminals were executed in a single reign. Well may we read, "the common sort of people were not much counted of, but sturdy knaves were hung up apace."

On the *Discovery of America*, the most easy and entertaining reading will be Robertson's "America," and the "Life of Columbus," by Washington Irving. Heeren's "Colonial Sys-

tem and Modern History," is chiefly valuable to more profound readers.*

The fourth portion of English History for extensive reading is

THE PERIOD OF THE CIVIL WARS.

Begin with Hume's "Charles I. and the Commonwealth." Dr. Smyth's "Lecture on the Civil Wars" will draw attention to the leading points, and direct your reading. Then the practised student will take Clarendon's "Rebellion." Sir W. Scott recommended it to his son as a book replete with wisdom, in a style somewhat prolix, but usually nervous and energetic. For many readers it is too long; but since its author combined a power of striking portraiture, and an intimate knowledge of the human heart, with deep political wisdom, and since he stood in a position which, nearly from first to last, gave a general view both of grand movements and secret springs of action, the work of this great man is one which no person of literary taste must long delay to read. Harris's "Lives of Charles I. and Cromwell" will give the view of an able writer of opposite views from those advocated by Clarendon. See also Forster's "Lives of the States-

* Dr. W. C. Taylor's "Manual of Modern History" is well worth having at hand in the study of the various periods named.—AM. ED.

men of the Commonwealth," and Carlyle's "Letters of Cromwell." The notes to these lives show great research, and are longer than the text. Godwin, in his "Times of Charles I. and the Republic," follows on the same side. Neal's "History of the Puritans" is reckoned good, and on the whole reliable. The first volume of Macaulay's "History of England" gives a clear and masterly summing up of all that could be said against the king. This, with Miss Strickland's "Life of Henrietta Maria," will interest even the dullest reader. Burnet's "Own Times" is certainly what Dr. Johnson termed it—most entertaining chit-chat of a man who went everywhere, and talked to every one. The first part, containing exclusively the result of his personal observation, is the most entertaining. "Hudibras," with Dr. Nash's notes, Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel," and Milton's prose works, may be read in connection; as also Sir W. Scott's "Woodstock." Miss Aikin's "Charles I." is very ably written. Short's "History," as well as Southey's "Book," will show the state of the Church. Read the "Memorials of Whitelock," a lawyer whose opinion was taken about ship-money, who served in the parliamentary army, and was appointed one of the council of state. Also "Memoirs of Holles," who was a playfellow

of Charles I. in his childhood; head of the Presbyterian party; lieutenant of the parliamentary forces, and raised to the peerage by Charles II. The "Memoirs of Ludlow," another leader of the Republicans, are full of interest; as also are those of Hutchinson. The "Life of Monk" usually read is that by Dr. Gumble, his chaplain, who once served on the republican, but afterwards wrote on the royal side. Guizot's "Monk" and his "History of the English Revolution of 1640," are very well worth examining.

The "Diary" of Samuel Pepys, Secretary to the Admiralty in the reigns of Charles II. and James II., extending over the years of the Restoration, the plague of London, and the fire of London, are invaluable illustrations of the manners of the 17th century.

THE FIFTH PORTION IS THE REVOLUTION OF 1688.

Dr. Smyth's twentieth "Lecture," will serve, as a guide, mark an outline, and quicken observation. Keightley's "History" gives an accurate knowledge of the course of events. Consult the opinions of Blackstone, Mackintosh, Hallam, and Russell on this point. Burke's opinion will be found in his "Letters on the French Revolution." Burnet's "Own Times" is in favor of William, to whom he was chaplain.

The "Diary of the Years 1687, 1688, 1689, and 1690," by Clarendon, son of the Chancellor, is in favor of James II. As he was averse to popery, he lost the privy seal, but he would not take the oaths to William III. Sir D. Dalrymple, much respected by Dr Johnson and his circle, published "Annals of Scotland to the Accession of the Stuarts," recommended by Dr. Smyth, as also are the "Memoirs of Sir J. Reresby." Hallam's "Constitutional History" should be consulted; also the "Stuart Papers," and memoirs and letters of all contemporaries. The "Memoirs of Evelyn," who held office in the reign of James II., are very curious. For more directions, read Smyth's twenty-second "Lecture" on William III. Read also Macaulay's "History of England from James II.," a work of acknowledged genius, vivid, stirring, and graphic. It has been severely criticized, and notwithstanding its undoubted merits, it needs to be read with some moderation and caution. See the article *against* it in the "Quarterly," and the *reply* in the "Edinburgh Review."

THE SIXTH SELECT PORTION OF ENGLISH HISTORY extends from the accession of George III., in 1760, to the present time.

Cats do not see till nine days old. Boys and girls attain nearly double that number of years

before they quite open their (minds') eyes. At that critical period they will only give reasonable proof of being quite awake, if they ask the time of day and what the people who were awake before them are about; "Where are we? what is going on? Let us know all about the present, and enough of the past, to make the present intelligible." For the information of this class of inquirers I would recommend my sixth selection of English history.

Begin by reading this part of history in Goldsmith; then take Miller's "George III.," which I have before described, (p. 30,) and select according to your own curiosity. The other continuous histories of George III. are, Belsham's, to the year 1793, and Adolphus's. Mr. Hughes's "Continuation" is greatly to be recommended. The "Life of George IV.," by Dr. Croly, may be read as a novel. The "Annual Register" is a very valuable series of records. It has been written by very able men: Edmund Burke wrote the historical parts for thirty years, beginning in 1758; and for years after it was written, under his direction, by Ireland. The "Gentleman's Magazine" is of the same kind of authority. It afforded Dr. Johnson his chief employment and support in 1738 and many following years. The "Annual Biography," as well as the "Edinburgh Review," "Quar-

terly Magazine," and "Blackwood," will most pleasantly and profitably supply and strengthen many a link in your chain of reading. It were scarcely too much to say, that if we make good use of the cyclopædias and periodicals above mentioned, we shall not require many other modern publications.

From Lord Brougham's "Statesmen" we may gain a great accession to our knowledge of later times, of which we shall make three subdivisions.

The first extends from the accession of George III. to the French Revolution.

In this period fill up your outline with the "Annual Register" and "Gentleman's Magazine," and then read the "Life of Burke;" that by Prior may serve, but it is not very good. Read Dr. Johnson's "Taxation no Tyranny;" also *his* "Parliamentary Speeches;" positively *his*, for he did not report but composed them, as you may see in a few most amusing pages in Hawkins's "Life," pp. 122-129, quoted in Croker's Boswell, i. 169-172. Read the lives of Chatham, Pitt, Fox, and others. I need not always specify which biography is considered best. Biographical dictionaries and cyclopædias often contain accounts of all, though concise. Do not be dismayed because you see works in four or five octavos each on your friends' tables.

Choose books which *you* feel that *you* can remember, not those which others read. Junius's "Letters" are so often quoted, that you should know something of them. The authorship is discussed in Brougham's "Characters," vol. i, as well as in "Sketches of Credulity and Imposture." Original letters of the Kings of England have been published by Sir H. Ellis, also by J. O. Halliwell.

Secondly, On the French Revolution and the Peninsular War; when you know the outline from the general histories, read the first two volumes of "Scott's Napoleon," which shows the long train of causes; then, if the other volumes are too long, read *Napoleon's Life*, by Lockhart, or Hazlitt, or by one of the French writers. Segur's *Russian Campaign* is as interesting as any novel. Proceed with the lives of Burke, Sheridan, and Wilberforce; and the life of Erskine, in the "Lives of Eminent Lawyers," in Lardner's "Cyclopædia." The actions by sea are related in Southey's "Life of Nelson," and some in the lives of Earls St. Vincent, Howe, and Collingwood; and the actions by land in Southey's and Napier's "Peninsular War," the "Life of Sir T. Picton," and "Despatches of Wellington." You may add, of course, memoirs of any contemporary public characters.

The third subdivision of this part of history extends from the end of the war to the present time.

The "Annual Biography," "Annual Register," and periodicals, are almost the only source of information. The "Penny Cyclopædia," and articles in Chambers's "Library," give very late news: other information must be sought in the latest memoirs of distinguished characters.

The practice of "reading and skipping" is so liable to abuse, that I must qualify it with a few observations. Read with a given object in view, and skip not all that is difficult, but all that is irrelevant. A few standard authors must be read from end to end; but many books may be read like a newspaper, which we search for information on certain points, passing by every article unsuited to our peculiar taste and curiosity. Bacon says, "Some books are to be tasted, some few chewed and digested." A book is like a guide, whom we leave when he has shown us what we want, not at all ashamed at not following him to his journey's end. For instance, if you wished to read ten different accounts of the Reformation; after reading one attentively, you would see at a glance that a second contained whole pages of facts which you already knew, and would therefore skip unless you wished to refresh your memory.

In taking up a third account you would find many, not only of the facts, but of the arguments, the same; and by the time you had read a fourth or fifth, you would look rather to the table of contents than to the pages, and turn only to the parts in which you expected more particulars. Again, the lives of Nelson, Howe, Earl St. Vincent, and others, I remarked, would give information about the British Navy. Reading with this view, you would skip whole chapters about the wars in which these admirals were engaged, if you had read them elsewhere, or intended to read history at some other time. In corroboration of this advice, let me add the following quotations from Dr. Smyth's "Introductory Lecture :"—

"This (method of reading part of books), it will be said, is surely a superficial way of reading history." Nothing but the impossibility of adopting any other course would ever have induced me to propose to students to read books in parts; but human life does not admit of any other expedient. We must either read books of history in this manner, or not read them at all. "The more youthful the mind the more hazardous the privilege thus allowed of reading pages at a glance, and chapters by the table of contents. But the mind, after some failures and some experience, will materially improve

in this great and necessary art—the art of reading much while reading little.”

Though I defend reading and skipping by so high an authority, let me add, that to indulge in the practice merely to evade difficulties and humor idleness and caprice, is like picking the plumbs out of your cake: you cloy the appetite, and find that what were otherwise a treat proves tasteless and insipid.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE.

THE principal points are the six following:—

1. The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.
2. The Revival of Learning.
3. The Religious Wars in the Low Countries.
4. The Thirty Years' War.
5. The French Revolution.
6. The History of British India, the Colonies of England, &c.

The student's object will, of course, be to learn an outline of the whole, and to gain a thorough knowledge of one division at least. These divisions are not all that are worthy of attention, nor do I attempt to name all the authors which throw light upon them, but only to give such assistance, that the reader may select other portions of history, and authors, for himself. And this observation applies to every subject on which I treat.

First, *On the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the great authority is Gibbon, whom I have before characterized. Milman's edition is the best for sound readers; Guizot's notes are also valuable. The history of the Decline and Fall is also given in the second volume of Lardner's "Cyclopædia." The article in the "Cyclopædia Britannica" is very comprehensive; but the best of the short accounts is in Tytler's "Universal History." For an account of Mohammed, read his "Life" by Dr. Bush, or Washington Irving; and read a little of Sale's Koran, with the Introduction, and, also, Carlyle's account of the impostor in his "Hero Worship." White's Bampton Lectures are quoted with deserved respect by most writers on the precepts of Mohammed. Dean Pridaux's Life of the same is old but good. Another valued authority is Ockley's History of the Saracens. Tytler (book vi. ch. 1.) writes briefly but comprehensively of Arabia and Mohammedanism. For the establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire, read Tytler (book v. ch. 4); read also ch. 5, 6, 7, on the last period of Roman History, and to learn the genius and character of the Gothic nations. The Franks, the feudal system, Charlemagne and his successors, the Normans, and the rise of the secular power of the Popes, and all

points of history deserving attention, are most easily to be learned from Tytler (book vi. ch. 2, 3, and 4).^{*} The Germans, their genius, laws, and customs, may profitably be read in the translation of Tacitus's "Germany." Dr. Smyth, in his second Lecture, strongly recommends Butler on the German Constitution. On all of these points, Gibbon may be consulted by means of the index or summary.

"Then you do not take it for granted we shall read the whole?" will be the exclamation of some student with large plans in his head. By no means; the thing is not practicable for one out of a hundred thousand, even if it were desirable. Beware, then, of a plan too extensive to execute. Did you ever see a pudding mixed? Well, the way is this,—take first a little flour, and then a little water; stir it well, till quite smooth, then add a little more, first of one, and then of the other, stirring and mixing, till quite free from lumps; but should you, in your haste, throw in a second handful of flour before the first is well mixed, all the stirring of all the cooks that ever delighted in perquisites, will not prevent the pudding from

^{*} Sir James Stephen's "Lectures on the History of France" are well worth having at hand for consultation.—
AM. ED.

being lumpy and indigestible. So the food of the mind, like the food of the body, must have due time for each accession to blend, amalgamate, and digest.

The second division is *the Era of the Revival of Learning*. Suppose that millions of guineas long buried in some miser's garden were suddenly dug up by those who little knew the value; some would be trampled under foot and lost; but if one hundredth part were restored to circulation and use, the result would be a sudden infusion of energy and emulation among business men in the vicinity. Such was the increase of spirit and activity which followed the sacking of Constantinople by the Turks, when though 120,000 MSS. are said to have perished, yet many were carried away by scholars to other nations, who knew more of their value than the degenerate Greeks. This event happened in the middle of the 15th century: but Dante and Wiclif, more than a century before, and then Petrarch and Boccaccio, who had exerted themselves to bring to light the great authors of antiquity, the former discovering the Epistles of Cicero, the latter bringing Homer from Greece to Tuscany, gave a promise of the general reviving of learning. A knowledge of this momentous era may be derived from the beginning of Hallam's "*His-*

tory of Literature," and part of his "History of the Middle Ages;" also from two chapters of Gibbon (the 53d and 66th); from part of Roscoe's "Leo X." and "Lorenzo de' Medici;" also from the introduction of Robertson's "Charles V." Mosheim's "State of Learning in the 13th and 14th Centuries," is much recommended. Read also especially, the "Life of Petrarch;" Vaughan's, or Le Bas's "Life of Wiclif;" Lives of Dante and Boccaccio, in Lardner's "Cyclopædia." Read Shepherd's "Life of Poggio," who early in the 15th century searched the monasteries for ancient MSS., and found Quintilian, some of the speeches of Cicero, besides Silius Italicus, and many of the later writers. To these add some account of the art of printing; and, for other sources of information, observe the authorities quoted by Hallam and others.

Doubtless all these sources have been searched, and their stores reduced to a portable and readily accessible form by the Cyclopædias and Biographical Dictionaries; for, as literature accumulates, it would become unwieldy, were it not that a constant demand for the gold without the dross operates with general literature as with laws and statutes; that is to say, it stimulates a supply of treatises and abridgments, which, like legal digests, contain enough for

general use, and point out the sources of deeper knowledge.

The third division, *the Era of the Reformation*, will cause me to refer to some of the authorities connected with the Reformation in England. Milner and Mosheim treat this period in the general course of Church History. Merle D'Aubigné's work is written with much warmth and unction; its great merit is, that the chief personages are allowed to speak for themselves, and speak to their heart's content; I can fancy D'Aubigné in every controversy standing by Luther, and crying "Hear, hear!" A careful perusal of D'Aubigné would be a good antidote against popery: as to the talent of the author, I would say of him, as of Boswell, that there have been hundreds of writers of far greater talent who would not have treated his subject so well. Intelligent readers, who have not time to read the whole, will find it easy to omit parts without losing the thread of the narrative.

Robertson's "Charles V.," Coxe's "House of Austria," and two chapters of Roscoe's "Leo X.," all bear on the same subject. The invention of printing and the revival of learning are of course closely connected with it. Indeed, with all the praise due to Luther and his friends, we must not presume that the most prominent are always the most efficient instruments in the

hands of Providence. The men who, like Petrarch and others, contribute to the expansion of the human mind, and thus lay the train and provide the fuel, act a part of greater use through self-devotion, than those who, whatever be their piety and courage, merely add the spark. The consideration, though humbling to man, is no less true, that the barbarism of the Turks, in disengaging and setting free the pent-up spirits of Constantinople, might not have done less service to the cause of Christ, than the never-failing faith and courage of those whom every true Christian to the end of time must admire. The truth is, God rolls along the still-untiring stream of time; and whether its surface is ruffled, as it were, by a ripple or a whirlpool—whether it bears on its white bosom the curling leaf or rifted oak—whether the licentious poets of Italy or the faithful scholars of Germany are struggling in its dark and mighty waters, still it onward moves, for purposes transcending mortal ken.

“Ignatius Loyola and the Jesuits,” and the “Port Royalists,” and indeed all the Essays by Sir Jas. Stephen reprinted from the Edinburgh Review, are truly valuable. Taylor’s “Loyola” also contains an excellent account of the Jesuits. “Philip II.,” by Coxe, and Grattan’s “Netherlands,” will give the most interesting

account of the religious wars in the Low Countries, than which there is no finer subject for contemplation in any part of modern history. Dr. Smyth's Lectures on the Reformation will be found very useful.

The Reformation is considered by Heeren the chief event which marks the commencement of Modern History; the other events which distinguish it from the History of the Middle Ages are the discovery of America, and the consequent development of the colonial system, the influence of the art of printing, and the improvement of the art of war by gunpowder. The era of the Reformation, therefore, will be a good point from which to begin a course of reading: this is the era at which Heeren commences his Modern History, a work I would strongly recommend to all those who desire to have clear and correct ideas on this important period of history.

The *Thirty Years' War* is well deserving the attention of all who have studied the Reformation. The detail of this portion of history is intricate; its principles and secret springs of action give much scope for that reflection which distinguishes the mere reading from the study of history. "The whole interval of about one hundred years, from the days of Luther to the peace of Westphalia, must be considered one

continued struggle, open or concealed, between the Reformers and the Roman Catholics." This is the language of Dr. Smyth, whose 13th Lecture will afford considerable assistance. The most important part of this interval is the Thirty Years' War; the other parts are filled chiefly with its causes and consequences. The best book for a commencement is the life of Gustavus Adolphus. After this, read Coxe's "House of Austria;" and, lastly, Schiller's "Thirty Years' War."

The next division is the period of the *French Revolution*. Alison's work is now generally allowed to supply what has long been wanted—a general history of the state of Europe during these momentous times.* The author has also published an epitome in one volume. Alison's work is very voluminous, and, like all long histories, it should be regarded as a general view and running commentary; the judicious reader will yet desire to examine the evidence of eye-witnesses, and to weigh and compare a variety of opinions. The true use of books is to give *facts* and *arguments*; after hearing evidence and counsel on both sides, every man who reads to any purpose will be his own judge


* An abridgment of Alison has been published in the United States, with corrections, and a chapter on our history, by Chancellor Kent. 1 vol. 8vo.—AM. ED.

and decide for himself. The man whose mind is stored only with the conclusions and judgments of others, is like a man who collects a set of rules and measures which he has not the art to apply, and at best only can attain to "truth in the wrong place." Therefore read parts of Miller's "George III." from 1789, for an epitome; then either the whole of Scott's "Life of Napoleon," or the first and second volumes, for the causes of the revolution. This was written "in one year of pain, grief, sorrow, and ruin." It was sold for £18,000, and, says Mr. Lockhart, "none of the pamphleteers could detect any material errors." The accounts of Carlyle, Mignet, Thiers, and Madame de Staël, are much recommended. The memoirs of Talleyrand, Fouché, Lafayette, the Prince of Canino, and every character of the times, are among the very best sources. The index of the "Edinburgh" and "Quarterly" will also be a ready clue to the most able dissertations. Few books relating to the revolution are reviewed without serving as a theme for an essay on the times. Sydney Smith, in his article on "Bentham's Fallacies," says the use of a review is to give a man who has only time to read ten pages the substance of two or three octavos. There are of course numerous excellent works, which it were as little useful as practicable to mention.

My only care is that the few works I specify on each subject be inferior to none for a commencement. I would specify more particularly Burke's "Letters on the French Revolution:" this is a book which no English scholar should fail to read. Mackintosh's reply gives the other side of the question. The flow of Burke's language is like that of a mountain-torrent rushing impetuously down over crags and rocks; that of Mackintosh resembles a stream smoothly gliding through ornamental grounds. Campbell said, that though the greater part were lost, any ten consecutive sentences would show the hand of a master as plainly as the genius of a sculptor is discerned in the mutilated marble of Theseus. If to these volumes is added the criticism on Alison's History in the "Edinburgh Review," the reader will have a fair knowledge of this momentous question. Add the French characters in Brougham's "Statesmen of George III." and Dr. Smyth's second course of Lectures which treat exclusively on the French Revolution. Other works worthy of notice will be found in my last section of English History, p. 144.

The last subject which remains to be mentioned in this connection is India, and other colonies of England.

Of BRITISH INDIA I have before spoken.



Hall's Travels contain a lively sketch of its history. The Cyclopædias also contain epitomes more or less concise, but each sufficient for general purposes. The history of British India in the "Family Library," and a volume of "Martin's Colonies," will also be a ready source of knowledge. Either of these works, as well as parts of Miller's "George III." will give *facts*, which, as they cannot be known too well, so they cannot be taught too simply. For the policy, principles, conclusions, and connection of effects with causes, read Mills's or Malcolm's "India," or both. I say *both*, because it is little trouble to read the second treatise when you *know* the first—not when you have merely *read* the first. Inexperienced readers, who cannot readily grapple with books of this kind, and really *know* them, should choose others. Musicians tell us to play easy pieces first, for it will take less time to learn one and twenty pieces of music if each is more difficult than the next preceding, than to learn only the one which is most difficult without the gradual discipline of the remaining twenty.

The "Life of Warren Hastings," or the article upon it, reprinted from the Edinburgh Review in Macaulay's Essays, should be read in connection with Edmund Burke's speeches. These speeches were delivered when Burke

was nearly sixty years of age: his "Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful" was published when he was only twenty-eight; yet it has been observed as very remarkable that Burke displayed far more poetical imagination in his speeches than in this essay, written at an age and on a subject better suited to call forth imaginative powers. The name of Hastings will remind my readers of the "enchanting power" which Pitt allowed to the eloquence of Sheridan on Hastings's trial. But the oratory of Sheridan was like the music of Paganini, which died with him. The oratory of Burke reminds us of many a musical genius who has left the world a written record of that harmony of soul which he had neither the voice nor hand to express. Burke's speeches, and indeed all his writings, are what Thucydides would term *κτῆμα ἐς αἰεί*. Burke had the same kind of knowledge of what things were natural, what artificial, what things belonged to the individual, and what to the species in the body politic, as a skilful physician possesses respecting the human frame. As anatomy and practice have taught the one, observation and analysis have taught the other. Burke is one of the chosen few, who, like Thucydides on the plague of Athens, and like Shakspeare on every subject, has shown that what is true to nature

is true always. Writings of this class exactly exemplify the saying of the Wise man:—“*The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be, and that which is done is that which shall be done.*” And if any man says, “*See this is new,*” let him look in the writings of such men as Burke, and he will find the case foreseen, the rule provided, and his wisdom forestalled, and that “*it hath been of old time which was before us.*” The best of all Burke’s speeches to read, as Mr. Prior, in his “Biography,” observes, is that on the Arcot debts; yet Pitt and Grenville agreed, while it was being delivered, that it was making so little impression on the House that they need not answer it.

On the ancient state of India, read one volume by Robertson, with notes and illustrations referring to other valuable writings.

The Life of Clive will give much information on the events of the last century; while the lives of Sir T. Munroe and Lord Wellesley will give later times. Heber’s Journal is an elegant composition; but it is principally valuable to the traveller in Hindostan. The same may be said of the Duke of Wellington’s Indian despatches. Read the work of Sir Alexander Burnes, and also the work of the Hon. M. Elphinstone, a book of deep learning, of the first authority, and the latest information.

On the subject of AMERICA in early times, read Robertson's History of the Conquest and Early Settlements, a simple but most deeply interesting narrative. Prescott's is the best account of Mexico. On the curiosities of Mexico, any catalogue will refer you to many accounts, with prints showing memorials of the long-lost arts of a most remarkable people. Read Prescott's Conquest of Peru. Inquire also for pictorial works on Peru, and read and examine Von Tschudi's Travels in Peru, and Rivero and Von Tschudi's Peruvian Antiquities, translated by Dr. Hawks. Dr. Johnson said, that a man who travels must take out knowledge with him, if he would bring knowledge home. This is as true of visiting collections from foreign countries, or reading books which describe them, as in visiting the countries themselves. While reading, we should think of things to examine when we visit a museum, and while walking about a museum we should think of new questions to be solved when we return to our reading. Catlin's work, illustrated with numerous plates, on the North American Indians, is well worth perusing; as also is the review of it in the "Edinburgh." Several similar books have lately been published, describing matters of the greatest curiosity in North America. On *Canada* and *New*

foundland, read Martin's "Colonies" or articles in the Cyclopædias. The same work by Martin will convey the latest information on Malta, Gibraltar, and other British settlements.

The preceding observations on Modern History will, I trust, be found sufficient. The general history of the continental nations is given in the Cyclopædias as fully as most readers require. Concerning France, the life of Richelieu and others, with histories of kings, or reigning families of most interest, may easily be selected, arranged, read, and digested, according to the principles already explained. The peculiar fancy of some readers may tempt them to search deeply into other parts of this extensive field; though I should strongly advise a preference to be given to the portions already discussed. For these are the portions most generally studied; a proof that experience has shown them to be best suited to the opportunities and wants of the present state of society. The study of history and general literature is like the study of law; that man reads to most advantage who makes such a selection from the ponderous records of the wisdom and folly of the past as enables him not to boast of recondite learning, but to bring most to bear at a given moment, to support an argument, or refute an adversary. Old people, old in years

but not in understanding, form most exalted notions of the literary advantages of the rising generation. They think that difficulties diminish as books increase; whereas, in furnishing our minds, as our houses, more is expected in proportion to our facilities. The term, *well-informed*, is not less a word of comparison than the term *rich*. And however much the labors of the learned may slope the way, the temple of knowledge may always be represented on a hill enveloped in a mist: the ascent should be drawn most precipitous and cloudy at the bottom, with crowds of travellers, dull, heavy, discouraged, and bewildered; while, towards the top, the slope should be gradual, the travellers few and far between, looking better both in health and spirits, and the mist clearing away, till the one happy man on the summit is in a flood of light, and cannot take off his hat to huzzah for the sun in his eyes. Fancy would add sign-posts, with "Beware of man-traps,"—"Try no short cuts,"—"The best road lies over the hill." In the foreground swarms of little children, of pantomimic proportions, might be selling penny guides to many an eager purchaser; while one or two sages were standing aside, presenting a chosen few with lectures of a far less tempting appearance on *patient and methodical industry*.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE STUDY OF ROMAN HISTORY.

THE first question which naturally occurs is, upon what ancient authorities is the history of Rome chiefly based? In reply, it may be stated, that Livy, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Polybius, Diodorus Siculus, Appian, Dion Cassius, Varro, Cicero, Sallust, Cæsar, Velleius, Tacitus, Suetonius, Plutarch, and Cornelius Nepos, are the principal classical authorities. The *Scriptores Hist. Augustæ*, Procopius, and others, are comparatively little consulted, except by men of the enthusiasm of Gibbon.

These authors I mention, because their names so often occur, that any young person would do well to employ an hour or two in reading a short account of them from a Biographical Dictionary. I would also show how arduous is the task of becoming profoundly learned in every part of Roman History. De Thou wrote 138 books on the continental broils, during the last half of the 16th century; but before he

began he knelt down and offered up a prayer that he might accurately and impartially execute a work to which, from that moment, he resolved to devote his life. Gibbon was twenty years composing the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. It would have taken many more years to write its rise and grandeur. To men of such genius and enthusiasm we leave the original authorities, and not entering the mine ourselves, are content with such specimens of the buried treasure as they bring to light. The above list does not contain the names of half the authorities who supply the whole chain of history; yet, short as it is, it comprises twice the number of books which enter into the classical studies of any of our colleges or universities.

I must now address myself to two separate classes of readers; first, to such youths as are at our higher class schools, or studying under a private instructor; secondly, to young ladies, or other general readers, who have only learning and leisure sufficient for a shorter and more general course.

To speak of the first class, the mode of reading history which they must adopt, is in some respects peculiar. They have not only to fill, but also to form their minds. Others may be permitted to be less careful of facts, when they

have gathered principles, and preserve the kernel without the husk; but these must seek to acquire a knowledge of principles, which they can only do by having facts available and ready at command. I would advise, therefore, that you read on the method before described, which I shall call the expansive principle. Begin with committing to memory an outline—then fill in no faster than you can make good your ground. Thus you will gradually but none the less surely rear such an historical edifice as will admit of continual addition and enlargement, without any part of your work being pulled down and wasted. This advice is no more simple than obvious. Many a student has been reading for years, collecting materials which were, at no single moment, from first to last, in a state to be put together, even supposing that the disorder of his mental store-room did not render it impossible ever to find or identify the many separate pieces he had laboriously collected.

Your first book should be "The Outline of the Roman History," by the Christian Knowledge Society. This little book, insignificant as it may seem, is not to be despised.* It traces

* The "Child's First History of Rome," by Miss Sewell, may be used for the purposes of an outline. It is an excellent little work. 18mo.—AM. ED.

the Romans as they gradually spread from a corner of Italy over nearly all the known world, and gives the chief dates, characters, and events. When this outline is known *thoroughly*, it will serve as a *memoria technica*, to connect and facilitate the recollection of more minute detail. For the difficulty in history is to remember, not the principles and general impression, but who said this, and who did that, and when or where particular actions occurred. Let this outline, then, be impressed deeply on your memory, so that you have, as it were, one Roman picture ever hanging before your mind's eye, to serve as a general map of the country, through which your classic path is doomed to lie for some years to come. A plan I found very useful was to draw out the leading historical facts on a sheet of paper, divided into vertical columns, each comprising one century. Four black horizontal lines cut all the centuries into quarters, and the sheet into departments. It is easy to remember the contents of each department, or the position of each fact on the chart, and thus you have a clue to dates and a long series of events. When this outline is perfectly familiar to the "mind's eye," proceed to fill it up according to your taste and inclination. To help you to do this satisfactorily, I would advise you to take Keight-

ley's "Roman History," or Dr. L. Schmitz's "History of Rome:" both are good.*

Here you have the choice of books; one is quite elementary; the others are in good-sized 12mo. volumes; and though certainly the first twenty pages in Keightley on the early Roman History and Constitution are very dry and scarcely intelligible, still the rest of the work is perspicuous, and contains enough for all ordinary purposes. The chief points to remark are these:—

The successive changes in the form of government, their effects, and causes;

The gradual rise of the plebeian power;

The conquests and accessions to the Roman dominions.

Trace also each distinguished character throughout all the events with his whole career, as far and as often as you find practicable.

During my early studies I had a friend with whom I used to talk every day, and discuss parts of history; and in these "peripatetic lectures," as we used to call them, the glorious exploits of the good, as well as the high crimes and misdemeanors of the bad, formed the subject of very animated controversy. The history

* Arnold's "History of Rome," and Niebuhr's Lectures on the History of Rome, are for consultation for older students.—AM. ED.

which we had so impressed on our minds we could scarcely forget; besides, inconsistencies were detected, and explanations sought, which would not otherwise have occurred. What you only *read* you may doze over, and your mind may wander just where attention is most required; but you can hardly converse on a subject without reflection.

At College, it was agreed between three friends, myself and two others, that whenever we met we should endeavor to puzzle each other with a question on Hérodoteus. The continual exercise of recollection and attention to which this mere frolic gave rise, rendered us all wonderfully accurate in ancient history. I would strongly recommend some such diversion to pupils in the higher classes in school. In one half year Keightley, or Schmitz, might be learned from beginning to end. Some questions have been published, which are useful to try your knowledge, only you must read about twenty pages, and lay the book aside; for to read with questions before you is a most pernicious practice, though one in which many indulge; the consequence is, that all original reflection is superseded, and every thing but the subject of the questions escapes notice. If any time remains when perfect in Keightley, or Schmitz, take Smith's "Dictionary of Greek

and Roman Antiquities," and read attentively about Consuls, Tribunes, Interregnum, Plebeians, and every term of office or dignity in Roman History. Mr. Rich, in his Dictionary, (with 2000 woodcuts of ancient arts and customs) has rendered the scholar valuable service, by using both the pencil and the pen on matters in which all students of history are interested. The five numbers of the Roman History, by the Useful Knowledge Society, contain much information, highly useful to classical scholars: the chapter on the Credibility of Roman History is particularly deserving of exact reading. Certain lives in Plutarch may be read in connection with Roman History. The articles on Livy, Rome, and the names of offices and magistrates in Anthon's Lempriere, are good, but unequal to Smith's.

This will probably be sufficient for the purposes of most of those who study Roman History in schools. For young ladies, however, and for general readers, I may furnish separate instructions.

Begin with the "Outline History" before mentioned, and learn it thoroughly; then read parts of Keightley, or Schmitz, on the Punic wars, or any other events which curiosity suggests. Keep up the outline by continual perusal, and regard it as a map of the Roman

empire, which you must daily consult to show you exactly whereabouts you are. Men of well-formed minds will readily observe all the changes in the constitution; young ladies, and others, in whom general curiosity and imagination predominate, can amuse themselves with the "most disastrous chances," and the many tragical positions in which Roman story abounds. Those who frequent theatres should see the Roman plays, Coriolanus, Julius Cæsar, and others. Much talent and industry is employed in the principal theatres, in providing scenery, dresses, and decorations, critically correct and true to the time and place in which each plot is laid. Many sets of Roman engravings will answer the same purpose, especially Rich's Dictionary with 2000 woodcuts. Our appreciation of Roman history greatly depends on terms and descriptions bringing before our mind's eye scenes and customs as they really existed. Swallow-tailed coats, livery servants, a regiment of champagne bottles, fan-bearing young ladies, and ice-presenting young gentlemen, must not rise in our imagination when we read of a Roman supper; neither must every shower of rain in Rome be associated with umbrellas, india-rubbers, and cab-stands. To prevent these modern from marring ancient views, the accounts of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and the late

discoveries in Etruria, will much contribute; as also "The Last Days of Pompeii," by Bulwer; "The Fawn of Sertorius;" "Pericles," a Tale of Athens; Becker's "Charicles," an illustration of the private life of ancient Greeks; "Gallus," (by the same author) admirably depicting the private life and customs of ancient Rome. "Macaulay's Lays," a work of which the printer, binder, and engraver have conspired to aid the effect of the poetry, will fill the dull-est with the spirit of ancient Rome. The bold engravings of Piranesi, which may be found in some libraries, will make so deep an impression on the imagination, that the buildings of the mighty city will be ever present to our imagination. There is also an inferior series of engravings, in the same style, representing all the principal scenes described in Rollin's "Ancient History:" this series gives more figures, and shows more of the Roman dress and armor, than Piranesi. A small edition of Adam's "Roman Antiquities," and Smith's "Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities," contain many engravings; but, for the pencil, all such works yield to Rich's Dictionary. With these works on Roman Antiquities, readers of the most ordinary curiosity will find their attention riveted to a variety of articles, describing how that mighty people eat and drank, and bathed,

and slept; to say nothing of how they debated, went to law, and fought; and the daily routine of their private life.

These works will make a pleasing variety while reading Keightley's, or Schmitz's History. Similar entertainment may be profitably derived from Fosbroke's "Treatise on the Arts, Manners, Manufactures, &c., of the Greeks and Romans." Next to Keightley, or, instead of it, I can recommend "A History of Rome, from the earliest Times to the founding of Constantinople," forming two small volumes of Lardner's Cyclopædia.* Mr. H. Merivale's History is chiefly drawn from the labors of the great historian Schlosser: some use is also made of the best standard histories. One continuous Roman History is enough for the general reader, and this from Schlosser, I think, deserves the preference.

So far I have only recommended one Roman Outline, and one or two Histories; and these, as I said of the histories of England, are mere skeletons; when you have a competent knowledge of them, and have perused the works on Manners and Customs, proceed at once to the

* Dr. W. C. Taylor's "Manual of Ancient History" may also be profitably used in any part of the student's examinations into ancient history.—AM. ED.

original authorities. The Punic wars in "Livy's pictured page," which Clarendon took as his model; the Catiline Conspiracy, which Johnson allowed to contain historic portraiture, because Sallust knew the characters; Tacitus, the philosophic annalist, who gives facts and principles, the secret springs and the great movements in the same sentence; Plutarch, first the lecturer, and afterwards the pro-consul, of Trajan, who studied at Athens and travelled through Greece and Egypt; the favorite author of Lord Chatham and Napoleon, each of whom would almost have said of Plutarch with Theodore Beza, what, in substance, a writer in the "Quarterly" said of Boswell, "that if we were obliged to throw all the books in the world into the sea, this should be reserved till among the very last;" think of each time-honored genius; how gladly would we invite him to wine and walnuts, and try to draw him out: and shall we not read his works when elegant translations are in almost every library? Have we not the curiosity even of the daughter of a country postmaster, who eagerly claims the perquisites of a peep at the letters of the great? We are not obliged to read one of these works through, but should cease to regard them as sealed books. We may take a translation of Cicero's "Letters," and see what he had to say to his wife

and family, and what to the public of those most eventful days. If we retain a knowledge of the general history, these authors will serve to fill up the outline, and every new idea will find its place, and tend both to pleasure and to profit.

Dunlop's "History of Roman Literature,"* and Schlegel's "Lectures on Ancient and Modern Literature," are standard works, deemed almost indispensable for those emulous of excelling in classic lore. Such works, however, can give only the mere terms and sounds of knowledge to that large majority of readers who are unacquainted with Greek and Roman writers.

A few hours devoted to the article on Rome, in "The Penny Cyclopædia," will be enough to give a fair insight into the constitution as developed by Niebuhr.

Of Cicero and his times, which are topics equal in interest to any part of Roman history, Middleton's "Life of Cicero" is the great authority. The Cyclopædias also contain compendious articles. Macaulay's "Survey of the Greek, Roman, and Modern Historians," pub-

* Browne's is a more recent work, and has been republished in the United States. It is well and carefully prepared.—AM. ED.

lished in the "Edinburgh Review," is very good.

Of Niebuhr's history, I have only to say that it is highly valuable to good classical scholars, but unintelligible to most English readers. Those who feel a laudable curiosity to know the nature of the discoveries by which Niebuhr has attained his fair renown, may find it in a review of his work, both in the Quarterly and Edinburgh Reviews.

Eustace's "Classical Tour" will profitably relieve and vary the study of Roman History.

R*

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE STUDY OF GRECIAN HISTORY, AND ANCIENT HISTORY GENERALLY.

THE "Outline History of Greece," by the Society, is the first book which I shall recommend for study.* The whole of the "Outline History" should be learned almost by heart, as I said before of English and Roman History. In Keightley or Schmitz, you may be contented to read only as far as the death of Alexander the Great: the remainder you may leave till almost every other part of Ancient History is exhausted. Of course, the same principle of study, and the same degree of accuracy, will be required with Grecian as with Roman History. Nine out of ten of ordinary advisers would tell you it was indispensable that you should read the whole of the Grecian History, by Mitford or Thirlwall, and the valuable work by Mr. Grote. The time for reading Mitford, in my opinion, is now gone by: the best part is the Life and

* As in the case of Roman History, Miss Sewell's *First History of Greece* may be used here.—AM. ED.

Times of Alexander; and this is better done in the Biography by Williams. Thirlwall's History is, unquestionably, a masterly performance; but the question is not what is creditable to the writer, but what is profitable to the reader. When your mind is prepared to realize, and make your own any parts of Thirlwall's History, then read those parts, and those only. You will ask to what preparation I allude; I mean that Thirlwall classifies facts, extracts principles, and makes comments. The preparation requisite to profit by his writings is therefore threefold: first, to be familiar with the facts which he quotes; that is, to take at a glance any sentence from Herodotus, Thucydides, or others, and feel a curiosity to know whether he has any thing more to say of it than you already know. Evidently, if you have never seen the sentence, it must, from want of previous thought and association, be a burthen to your memory, without assisting your understanding. The second preparation is, to be used to compare some, at least, of the sentences which Thirlwall classifies: then, and then only, will you be improved by that increased quickness of observation, and that ready comprehension of all the bearings of facts, which a good history should serve to promote. A historian, like a judge, should sum up, arrange, and weave into

one plain story, all that falls from competent witnesses; while the reader, like a jurymen, should decide, not by the leaning of the judge, but the bearing of the evidence. It follows, then, that besides being first conversant with facts, and, secondly, having viewed them in connection, the third qualification is a competence to form an independent judgment upon them. Few persons, I admit, enjoy this three-fold qualification for the whole of any history; still a mature mind can weigh and decide on one page, understand enough to assent to a second, and suspend judgment on a third.

Mr. Keightley has written a small *Elementary History of Greece*. Dr. Leonard Schmitz has recently performed the same service in an excellent 12mo. vol. Before these publications, there appeared a *History of Greece*, by the Useful Knowledge Society, which, as I know by private information, was first submitted to the revision of Dr. Arnold. This contains about 300 double-columned pages; the first 150 of which comprise all events to the death of Alexander.

The student, who has followed my advice so far, may read the lives of Pericles, Nicias, and the other Grecian characters in Plutarch. Above all, he should learn accurately every event in those chapters of the first book of Thucydides

which treat of the interval between the Persian and Peloponnesian wars: here part of Thirlwall's Greece will be the best commentary. Let him read this portion till he can trace every step in the rise of the Athenian supremacy.

I have now given as long a course of Grecian History as any youth can be reasonably expected to carry out successfully. I might add much more; but I apprehend that it is not expedient. Very great designs, and comparatively very little doings, I find enter into the confessions of every student. Young persons are always sanguine; and when they once are betrayed, by a very excusable but fatal ambition, into forming too large a plan, the work is wanted long before the two ends meet. Books, however short, require a certain time for reading, a certain time for reflecting, and a certain time to digest; that is, to blend with our system, to become part of our mental implements, and to serve as a common measure and everyday standard of thought.

It is worth remembering, that a man never learns the use of instruments, whether mental or physical, so readily or so thoroughly as when he has few of them. The rude implements of the Indian have surpassed the machinery of Manchester. "John Hunter's head," said Abernethy, "was like a bee-hive;" not that he meant to say it was all in a buzz, but that it had a

separate cell for every store. The modern Attic bees are in a hurry to gather the honey before they have prepared the wax. My advice is, to read, on each subject, one outline, again and again, till you have once formed the cells: you may then sip of every flower in the wide field of literature,—fill without confusion, and preserve without loss.

Since 1836, we have been favored with the works of Thirlwall, and Wordsworth. Of the value of these, if read judiciously, in a spirit of inquiry, we can hardly say too much. The mind requires not only relief but variety, which Wordsworth's "Greece," a book of entertainment and lively interest, is well calculated to afford. Eustace's "Classical Tour" is of similar value to the readers of Roman literature. I would also suggest translations of Arrian, Pausanias, Xenophon (especially his smaller treatises), and almost every original authority which comes to hand. These you may read for variety. Far from intending to overtask your mind, I advise you to read more or less, to select the amusing, or to toil through the intricate, according to the principle I have already vindicated of being guided by taste and inclination.

Many young persons who read Latin and Greek pretty well, think it an imputation on their scholarship to use translations of the

classics for general purposes of historic reading. But this is quite a mistake, be assured. Surely it is as worthy of a scholar to read a translation of Xenophon, as an English history which gives the narrative of Xenophon, not only translated but condensed. Many talk of reading Greek like English ; but there are very few men who can read other languages, least of all Greek and Latin, with quite as little effort as their own. Bring any silly pretender to the proof ; lay before him the first column of a daily paper, and the first page of the *Oraiores Attici*, or of Xenophon's Grecian History, and challenge him to a trial. The truth is, there is a kind of short-hand reading, by which we catch the sense of a sentence, without seeing more than one word in a line. Without this expeditious act, which we practise quite unconsciously, the time and toil of reading would be greatly increased. And will any one pretend that he can skim over Plutarch as safely as Langhorne's translation ? Sound scholars may find time for translations when too weary for the original ; and these translations of contemporary authors form a better commentary than any English essays I can recommend.

English translations are chiefly useful to the classical student in two ways. To leave entirely out of the question how readily translations

explain difficult passages of those authors which are read in the original, without arguing how much they may contribute to elegance, and how much they do contribute to idleness, and sap the foundations of all sound scholarship,—the first use of translations to classical students, who have not time to read the originals, is to enable them more thoroughly to appreciate, and therefore to profit by, the historical compilations to which they are obliged to trust for a large part of Grecian as well as Roman History.

Let every student who desires to make solid progress, keep a well-read, “marked and quoted” copy of a History of Greece; let this form his outline, or, as Abernethy would say, his series of cells; and during his leisure hours let him amuse himself with marking on the margin any part of Plutarch, Pausanias, or other authority which he identifies in his author. With a little reflection he may see that the writer (for we are all fallible) has said too much on one point, too little on another, and has not chosen the best illustration or argument in support of a third. This exercise of judgment is very improving; indeed it is more improving to think erroneously sometimes than to follow blindly along, like a traveller who observes only what his guide points out. Practice soon makes perfect, and rewards perse-

Verance with most pleasing satisfaction. The student should try continually to enlarge the sphere of his judgment, and gradually extend these marginal notes and references, which will delightfully mark his progress over the greater part of the volume. How many a classical anecdote passes traceless through the mind, because we want a cell for it—because we have no ideas to keep it company—no such commonplace book in which to set it down! How difficult is it for the young to see that the value of facts, as of figures, is determined by the series in which they stand! Yet nothing is more likely to render us alive to their value than the constant comparison which translations will suggest between some seemingly unimportant observation of Plutarch and the social or political institutions which it ingeniously elucidates in our chosen History.

The first time we read Herodotus it seems like a collection of stories; at the second reading we begin to trace the connection, till gradually the mist clears away, the scene becomes distinct, and large sections of the ancient world open to our view. Another suggestion for expanding the mind, and teaching "How to observe" (the title of a clever volume by Miss Martineau), is, to read Herodotus through, once, without assistance, and a second time in con-

nection with a history founded upon it by Heeren, called "Researches into the Politics, Intercourse, and Trade of the principal Nations of Antiquity." Heeren, like those who travel into comparatively unknown countries, is rather apt to be led too far, by an endeavor to bring to light curiosities commensurate with his toil, and is accused of drawing conclusions rather more extensive than his premises; but this is only saying, that in reading Heeren, like every author, you should attend to him, and judge for yourself.

Again, translations are a key to the only true source of what, to many readers, is the most valuable parts of history, the manners, customs, and general spirit of past ages. Niebuhr has laid open great part of the Roman constitution, but as to the habits of life, topics of conversation, and subjects of thought, which filled up the twenty-four hours of every day at Rome, or at Athens, here is still a wide field for discovery. The books on Antiquities, by Smith, Rich, Adams, and Potter, convey mere fragments, and at best are no more to be compared to the perusal of the original authors, than the scraps of information from a tourist's guide-book are to be compared to the digested knowledge and enlargement of mind produced by foreign travel. "For this knowledge of anti-

quity," said Niebuhr to my informant, "the materials lie widely scattered; every scholar must collect and arrange as many as he has the industry or the ingenuity to discover: and in putting them together, like the pieces of some ancient pavement, to form one consistent pattern delineating ancient life, the mind receives a most invaluable exercise."

Supposing you wished to know the spirit of the last century, and the general state of society, history would tell you that a taste for literature, or sense of religion, were less general than at the present time. By such vague and negative testimony, diluted in a flood of words, with the mere names of "men eminent for piety or learning," do historians (with rare exceptions) convey impressions which they have derived, and which I would recommend my readers to derive, from memoirs and private letters written by the most distinguished characters of their respective times. Consider, for instance, the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; think not only of the general tone and spirit of them, not only of the social influences and surrounding scenery which must have conspired to form the mental, stint the moral, and wither the spiritual perceptions of the characters those letters betray; but think of the state of society, when a lady of rank could complain in a letter

to a friend, that so deplorably ignorant, and devoid of all but folly and vanity, were the minds of the young ladies of fashion, that they were more open to sophistry, and more commonly turned atheists, than even the professed rakes of the other sex; and instead of that modesty which should teach respect for married persons, they really laughed at them, as having prudishly fettered themselves by an obligation with which the world had become wise enough to dispense.

Equally great is the difference between the impressions which even English readers may receive by translations of Xenophon or Cicero, and the vague and senseless observations of modern writers. In short, if you would rather listen to "thoughts that breathe," in "words that burn," from a traveller telling his own story, than to a spiritless version second-hand—if you would be better satisfied with hearing truth drawn by instalments, and with all the reluctance of the seven teeth of King John's Jew, from a lying witness by a sharp counsel, than with reading a report of the same trial in ten lines—if you would enjoy all the strife of tongues, and time-beguiling interest of a debate in the House, more than the summary in a country paper a week after—then must you also prefer picking your way through transla-

tions of the classics, and culling the choicest sweets and flowers, according to your own taste and appetite, to any essays on manners and customs, and any of those meagre descriptions to which we may well apply the words of Byron,—

“’Tis Greece, but living Greece no more.”

By such arguments would I recommend the use of translations to those students whose limited opportunities must cause many valuable works to remain unread in the original; but to the general reader I would also observe, that Jeremy Taylor says,

“I consider that the wisest persons and those who know how to value and entertain the more noble faculties of their soul and their precious hours, take pleasure in reading the productions of those old wise spirits who preserved natural reason and religion in the midst of heathen darkness, such as Homer, Euripides, Orpheus, Pindar, and Anacreon, Æschylus, and Menander, and all the Greek poets, Plutarch, and Polybius, Xenophon, and all those other excellent persons of both faculties, whose choicest dictates are collected by Stobæus; Plato and his scholars, Aristotle, and after him Porphyry, and all his other disciples, Pythagoras, and especially Hierocles and all the old Academics and Stoics within the Roman school.”

Jeremy Taylor then expresses a hope that such readers "may be invited to love and consider the rare documents of Christianity, which certainly is the great treasure-house of those excellent, moral, and perfective discourses, which, with much pains and pleasure, we find thinly scattered in all the Greek and Roman poets, historians, and philosophers."

Consider, in the classical records of the wisdom of antiquity, the faint glimmerings of life and immortality, which it remained for the Gospel fully to bring to light; consider the evident yearning of the souls of men for knowledge; consider the history of unassisted reason, which describes such discord in the feelings of each heart, and such want of harmony among the members of each state, as plainly showed how much men wanted knowledge of the uses and relations of the several parts of the complicated machinery of the moral world. Let these points be kept in view by those who read the classics through the medium of translations. Then will they read in Thucydides how Nicias, amidst all the dangers of the Sicilian campaign, tells his soldiers "his hope and comfort is to reflect that he had always dealt honestly with his neighbor, and been mindful of his God." How Euripides says, that "the man who has his God for his

friend has the fairest hope of prosperity;" and Pliny, that "it is god-like in man to show charity to man, and this is the road to eternal life." In the Greek tragedians they will see humility so inculcated as to show that the minds of the Athenians were fully possessed by the feeling that the man who did not ascribe his prosperity to the hand of Providence, but showed a proud and unchastened spirit, was in danger of severe visitations; while, under the all-prevailing fear of Até, we may discern that the Athenians were less incredulous than many in later times of the truth of the threat, that the sins of the fathers should be visited on the children unto the third and fourth generation. From such discoveries of unassisted reason, a certain class of philosophers, who presume that that is contrary to all reason which does not accord with their reason, may learn a lesson of caution lest they be refuted on their own grounds.

These observations of the value of translations apply more or less to all readers. I must now address myself, as I promised, more particularly to young ladies, and other general readers.

This class of readers must use the outline history and the works of Keightley or Schmitz, before mentioned, and study according to the

method explained with the History of Rome. They may be satisfied with reading, first of all, to the death of Alexander the Great. To fill up their outline they should read the Grecian characters in Plutarch,—Xenophon's "Retreat of the Ten Thousand," and "History of Greece," which begins where Thucydides leaves off, near the end of the Peloponnesian war. On the Peloponnesian War, and the state of Greece for half a century preceding it, read a translation of Thucydides by Mr. Dale. Attend particularly to the curious specimen of historical criticism in the first twenty chapters; to all the speeches; the plague of Athens; the sedition of Corcyra; the siege of Plataeæ; and all the other actions by land and sea: and read attentively from the beginning to the end of the Campaign in Sicily. Beloe's Herodotus contains the materials of a very large part of ancient history. For the life of Alexander the Great, read the work of Arrian, to whom the younger Pliny addressed several of his epistles. Arrian's history is founded on the memoirs of Aristobulus and Ptolemy Lagus, who served under Alexander. A life of Alexander, by Williams, is well written. Gain an accurate knowledge of the route at the north of India: this will give an interest to Oriental travels lately written, especially those by Sir A. Burnes

and Masson, as also that of Vigne, whose conjecture that Cabul is the same as Cau-Pol (Καυκάσου πόλις), is, as Professor Wilson allowed, highly probable. The speeches of Demosthenes "On the Crown," and his three "Philippica," as well as that orator's life by Plutarch, may well be read in connection with the history of Philip of Macedon. I should also recommend the "Œdipus Tyrannus" of Sophocles, by Potter; the "Agamemnon" of Æschylus, translated by Sewell; and the "Medea" of Euripides, as highly serviceable to initiate the mind into the mysteries of Grecian fable. One of my female friends has read all the plays of these authors in English. You may also pick your way through some of the dialogues of Plato, especially the "Phædon," and Gillie's translation of Aristotle's "Politics." As to the rest of Ancient History, instead of Rollin's "Ancient History," which, like Russell's "Modern Europe," tends, as I have generally observed, rather to the *confusion* than the *diffusion* of knowledge, read Heeren's "Researches both in Asia and Africa."

This course of reading may seem long; but since I leave each person to select, more or less, according to the strength of his appetite and digestion, I must say, that what is here proposed requires less time to follow, and less per-

severance to overtake, than Rollin's "Ancient History." Pope's "Homer" I need hardly mention; so generally is it known and read by both young and old. See Johnson's sensible criticism on it in his life of Pope.

I will now conclude my observations on Grecian History and Ancient History generally, with remarks for the benefit of all classes of readers. The reason I extend my list of books is to give more scope for variety of taste and inclinations, and not by any means to dispense with the rule, NEVER READ TOO MUCH TO READ WELL.

Egyptian antiquities deserve especial notice. Orpheus, Linus, Musæus, Amphion, Sanchoniathon, and Homer, as well as Pythagoras and Plato, all visited Egypt. Solon, too, was assisted by the Egyptian priests; and it was in Egypt that Herodotus found abundance to gratify his inquiring spirit. From Egypt came the religion of the Greeks; and whatever in Grecian mythology seems to coincide with the Law and the Prophets, has been not unreasonably supposed to have been derived from the Egyptians, and by them from the Israelites. That the Egyptians did receive many things from those guardians of the Oracles of God, can indeed hardly be doubted.

Iamblicus, the preceptor of Julian, A. D. 360,

speaks of "the inscriptions on the ancient columns of Hermes, on which Plato and Pythagoras formed their philosophy." Now these columns existed in Egypt in the time of Proclus, B. C. 500; and on them were inscriptions according with the doctrine of the Trinity, as is ingeniously explained by Serle, in his "*Horæ Solitariae*," who mentions also a name of the Deity "as near as translation can attain to *Jehovah*." If I add the columns mentioned by Procopius, found in the part of Africa where the Carthaginians settled, inscribed, "We are they that fled from the face of Joshua, the son of Nun, the Robber," the reader can require no further argument to show the interest which must attach to that land famed for wisdom in the days of Moses. Therefore, besides Heeren's "*African Nations*," Dr. Pritchard's "*Egyptian Mythology*" is a valuable work. Sir G. Wilkinson's "*Private Life, Religion, &c., of the Ancient Egyptians*," derived from a study of their hieroglyphics and works of art, during a residence of twelve years, and published with 600 illustrations, a very valuable work, is of great interest; Bunsen's *Egypt* (with numerous plates) is a later work, and in many respects unequalled.*

* Kenrick's "*Ancient Egypt under the Pharaohs*;" Dr. Hawks's "*Egypt and its Monuments*;" Osburn's "*Antiqui-*

Of Travels and modern writings for students of Grecian History, the best are Dodwell's "Topographical and Historical Tour through Greece," Gell's "Itinerary," and Leake's "Travels." Müller's "Dorians" is only valuable to men of accurate classical reading, who should read it in connection with Herodotus and Thucydides. The articles on Athens and Greece, in the "Penny Cyclopædia," are very usefully composed. Müller's "Attica and Athens" has lately been translated by J. Ingram Lockhart. Stewart's "Antiquities of Athens," with seventy plates, is valuable: a slight glance at Mr. Wordsworth's "Greece," will show that it supersedes all earlier writers; for he has availed himself of the contents of all travels and works on Greece existing at the time he wrote. Flaxman's "Lectures on Sculpture," and the "Specimens of Ancient Sculpture, selected from different collections of Great Britain by the Society of Dilettanti," as well as the Townley, Elgin, and Phigaleian Marbles, in the "Library of Entertaining Knowledge," may be consulted on the arts of Greece.

A "History of the Literature of Greece," by

ties of Egypt;" Dr. W. Cooke Taylor's "Bible Illustrated from Egyptian Monuments;" are all excellent and well worth consulting.—AM. ED.

Müller, will be found in the "Library of Useful Knowledge."*

Lastly, I would recommend my readers to gain a clear knowledge of the length and breadth of the several parts of Greece, especially Attica; and to compare every measurement with that of some town or county in their own country with which they are familiar.

I have now said enough on the subject of history. There are doubtless many other topics and writers deserving notice, no less than some on which I have been most explicit. These, as I said before, the reader who comprehends the principle of the preceding observations, will readily discover, and study systematically without any more assistance. I am only afraid that the variety of subjects and books already mentioned should tempt young persons to try too much. The first thing to consider is, for what purpose you are commencing a course of study. If, to humor a literary ambition, to be thought learned, and excite the wonder of the ignorant, believe me, that, till you abandon this vile and degrading purpose, your vanity will increase faster than your learning. What you

* Browne's "History of Greek Literature" is a very fair work; Dr. Charles Anthon has recently issued a volume on the same subject, marked by the learned author's usual ability and care.—AM. ED.

gain in head you will lose in heart; your mind will be filled, but not refined; and you will excite far more jealousy than admiration. Read, as Bacon said, "for the glory of your Creator and the relief of man's estate;" to improve your talents for running the race that is set before you; to prevent that periodical void within, which (like a vacuum) is doomed to fill, and that with gnawing cares and soul-debasing thoughts. Hear what Horace says,— a fine motto for a Bible :—

"Et ni

Posces ante diem ~~LIBRUM~~ cum lumine, si non

Intendes animum studiis et rebus honestis,

Invidiâ vel amore vigil torquebere."—HOR. EP. I. 2. 87.*

That is true of our faculties, what an old officer told me of his men, that there was no such security for good behavior as active service. The lusts of the flesh maintain "a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether," one way; and while reason, conscience, and religion are arrayed against them, the balance may be preserved. But when these guards are not on duty, or perchance are slumbering at their post,

* "Unless before the day dawn you shall call for a Boom with a light, unless you shall apply your mind to study and honorable pursuits, you will, in your waking hours, be tortured with envious or lustful passions."

it is well if the history of the past, or some such innocent recreation, employs our memory, and engages our imagination; because should these allies be gloating over old pleasures or devising new, they will be playing on such dangerous ground, that they may rouse up the enemy, and the citadel may be taken by surprise.

In following out one course of reading, do not be impatient or disturbed because you do not seem to be advancing as rapidly as others. Among the many who desire to be thought literary characters, nothing is more common than an inclination to lock up the temple of knowledge and throw away the key; or, on attaining any eminence, to kick away the ladder, that none may follow them.—So beware of this class of literary impostors: their life is one continued lie;—a lie partly positive, because they pretend they know far more than they do know; and partly a lie indirect, but much more mischievous, because they seek to magnify difficulties, hint that things are not so easy as they seem, and pretend that a peculiar talent is required for their favorite subjects. In every department of knowledge the man really proficient is ever desirous to lead others on; and, forgetting all the difficulties he encountered, firmly believes, and as honestly

confesses, he could teach his friends in half the time his learning cost himself.

We should employ our minds with history, in the same way as we should have done had we lived in the times described. Man need not become a walking cyclopædia, nor feel more in honor bound to remember every date or circumstance of former reigns, than every event in last year's newspapers. We should read for the same purpose that we enter society, to observe. The wisdom of the lesson may be remembered when the facts are lost; and the moral remain, though we forget the fable. The portions of history which enter into common conversation are limited, and experience will soon induce us to give them more attention than the rest. No man need be ashamed to say, when his memory is at fault, "this or that has escaped me; let me ask a question or two, and I shall be able to follow you." Few persons are so ill-bred as to introduce abstruse subjects into general society. If you join a party of antiquaries you must expect antiquarian topics; otherwise no man of ordinary reading can be at a loss for facts while he has the power of reasoning and reflection. Next to the improvement and entertainment of your own mind, your design should be to inform yourself on the general topics of conversation.

Read about the North of India, Spain, Ireland, China, Japan, Russia, Turkey, Hungary, or any other part of the world interesting at the time present. To read only of the past is to be always out of fashion, and as uninteresting as an old newspaper. Men of extensive reading find their chief advantage in this; not that they remember all they read, but that they know exactly where to seek for information, and can with a little trouble bring to bear on the prevailing topic of the day such stores of varied knowledge as others would be quite at a loss to find.

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CHAPTER VII.

HOW TO REMEMBER WHAT WE READ.

MOST readers, I presume, will open this chapter with no little curiosity, and a feeling which would be expressed by these words: "My memory is bad enough—would it were as good as that of such a one of my friends. Let me see if there can be any rules to suit so bad a case as mine." Now, before you decide that you have a worse memory than your friend, let me ask, Is there no one subject on which you can equal him? You have no doubt observed that a large class of men, who are devoted exclusively and literally to *animal* pursuits, sportsmen to wit, have the greatest difficulty in remembering matters of history or general literature, but yet are so ready with the names of all the winners at the races and the progeny and pedigree of each, that a scholar would be as much surprised at their memory of horses and mares, as they could be at the scholar's memory of kings and queens. Probably you

will now say, "All this we grant; it is true we have memory for some things, but not for literature." Your meaning is, that you have *memory* where you have *attention*. The sportsman cannot attend to books, nor the scholar to horses. *The art of memory is the art of attention*. A memory for literature will increase with that interest in literature by which attention is increased. The sportsman could remember pages of history relating to forest laws or encouragement of the breed of horses, but not the adjoining pages on the law of succession, and only because he felt an interest, and consequently paid attention, in reading the one but not the other.

Again, Memory depends on association, or the tendency of some things to suggest or make us think of others. The geologist remembers fossils, but not flowers; and the botanist flowers, but not fossils. Each has in his mind "a cell" for the one specimen but not for the other; and the observations which fall in with the ideas of the geologist, and link to many a subtle chain of thought, remain alone and unassociated in the mind of the botanist. Association certainly is, in some respects, an aid to attention; they are usually considered as distinct, and the basis of Memory; therefore every rule I can give for promoting either attention or association will be virtually rules for Memory.

First, *Memory is assisted by whatever tends to a full view and clear apprehension of a subject.* Therefore, in reading history, occasionally lay the book aside, and try if you can give a connected narrative of events. "What thou dost not know, thou canst not tell;" but clear ideas never want plain words. Do not be satisfied with feeling that the subject is too familiar for repetition to be necessary. The better a story is known, the less time it will take to repeat. Put your "thoughts in express words." This is an invaluable exercise; for, first of all, you will greatly improve your power of expression, and gain that command of language on which one of my friends heard Fox compliment Pitt, as having not only *a* word, but *the* word, *the very* word to express his meaning. Moreover, the practice of putting your thoughts into words will improve your power of Conception. When you see a speaker, in a long argument, contract and fix his eye as if on some aerial form, he is trying to body forth his ideas, and hold them up as a picture from which he may select, read off, and lay before his hearers such portions as he thinks will convey the desired impression. Conception is the quality for which we call a man "clear-headed;" for this enables him to grasp at one view the beginning, middle, and end of what he means to say, and have the

order of his ideas at the direction of a cool judgment, instead of depending upon chance:—

“Ut jam nunc dicat jam nunc debentia dici,
Pleraque differrat præsensque in tempus omittat.”

HOR. *Ep. ad Pis.* 44.*

To repeat a narrative to another is better still than repeating it to yourself; you are more excited to accuracy, and your memory is assisted by the degree of attention and association which casual remarks and questions may promote.

With a view to distinct conception, Writing is usually recommended to aid memory. As to mere transcribing, though much has been advanced in its favor, I believe it is by no means to be adopted. Much experience has shown me that it not only wastes time, but deceives us as to the extent of our knowledge. We are flattered at the sight of the paper we fill, while in reality we are exercising not our wits, but our fingers. Every student knows how common it is to find men of misguided industry with desks full and heads empty. Writing never aids memory, but when it tends to clear Conception. Most persons find it more pleasant to draw a sketch of a subject on a sheet of paper than on

* “That he say, at the very beginning, the things which ought there to be said, and that he put off most things and omit them for the present.”

the tablets of the mind ; but let them not suppose it is more improving.

When you want relief or variety, you may try to write, instead of repeating the subject of your morning's reading ; but you will soon admit that the *vivâ voce* exercise is the better of the two. In speaking of Conception, Abercrombie relates the case of a distinguished actor, who created great surprise by learning a long part with very short notice. "When questioned respecting the mental process which he employed, he said that he lost sight entirely of the audience, and seemed to have nothing before him but the pages of the book from which he had learnt, and that, if anything had occurred to interrupt that illusion, he should have stopped instantly."

Secondly. *Memory is assisted by whatever adds to our interest or entertainment.* Therefore all the remarks I have made relative to being guided by curiosity and inclination, are hints for memory. A man rarely forgets a fact which he hears in answer to a question he has himself originated ; and the art of reading is, to gain facts in such order that each shall be a nucleus or basis, as Abercrombie says, of more ; in other words, that every fact may be an answer to some question already in our minds, and suggests in its turn a new question in an endless series.

Thirdly. *Memory depends much on a thorough determination to remember.* Most persons have memory enough for the purposes of their own business. Ask the guard of the mail how he remembers the places at which he has to drop his many parcels, and he will tell you "because he must." And if you put the same question to any number of different persons whose fortune depends on the constant exercise of memory, you will invariably receive similar answers, which is a proof from experience that our memory depends very much on our own will and determination. If, by the force of resolution, a person can wake at any hour in the morning, it is easy to believe that, by the same means, he may also have a powerful command over his memory. While at the University, I had a very remarkable proof of this. I was assisting in his studies, previous to examination, a friend who assured me he could not remember what he read; that such had been the case during fourteen University terms. But I said, "Now you must remember,—I know you can,—and I will have no more to do with you if you do not answer me correctly to-morrow on what we read to-day."

Having rallied him in this way, I heard no more of the complaint. After his examination he assured me that he was perfectly surprised

at the extent to which his memory had served him, and fairly acknowledged that for years he had given way to a state of mental inactivity, never stopping to try his memory, but drinking of the Castalian stream rather after the manner of Baron Munchausen's horse, when he had lost his hinder quarters with the portcullis. A man can remember to a great extent, just as Johnson said a man might at any time compose, mastering his humor, if he will only set to work with a dogged determination: "*Possunt quia posse videntur*," "for they can conquer who believe," is very generally true where the mind is concerned. A very common reason that men do not remember is, that they do not *try*; a hearty and ever-present desire to prevail is the chief element of success. Nothing but the fairy's wand can realize the capricious desire of the moment; but as to the objects of laudable wishes, deeply breathed and for many a night and day ever present to the mind, these are placed by Providence more within our reach than is commonly believed. When a person says, If I could only have my wish, I would excel in such an art or science, we may generally answer, The truth is, you have not really such a wish; what you covet is rather the empty applause than the substantial accomplishment. The fault is "in ourselves and not

our stars," if we are slaves, and blindly yield to the pretensions of the many whose tongues would exhaust wiser heads than their own in half an hour. Before we complain of want of power and mental weapons, let us be sure that we make full use of what we have. When we see one man write without hands, and another qualify himself (as in an instance within my own remembrance) for high University honors without eyes, a complaint of our memory, or other faculties, justifies the same conclusion as when workmen complain of their tools.

These, or at least other instances equally surprising, are founded on good authority. Still Abercrombie justly says, though the power of remembering unconnected facts and lists of words makes a great show, and is the kind of memory most generally admired, still it is often combined with very little judgment, and is not so important a feature, in a cultivated mind, as that memory founded on the relations, analogies, and natural connections of different subjects, which is more in our own power. Indeed, mere parrot memory is of less use than is generally supposed. It is true, it enables a superficial person to pass off the opinions of others as his own; but educated men can generally remember enough for their own purposes, and can command data sufficient for the opera-

tions of their judgment. What we most want ready and available is the power and the science, not the tools. A mathematician is such still without his formulæ and diagrams. The oldest judge remembers the rules of law, though he forgets the case in point, and the ablest counsel are allowed refreshers. It is enough that our minds, like our guns, carry true to the mark without being always loaded.

Fourthly. *Memory is assisted by whatever tends to connection or association of ideas.* When I asked the friend above mentioned the particular means he took to remember his lectures previous to examination, he said, that besides looking everything "more fully in the face" than he had ever done before, he tried "to match, sort, and put alongside of something similar," each event in its turn, and also to say to himself, "Here are four or five causes, circumstances, or characters relating to the same thing; by such a peculiarity in the first I shall remember the second, while something else in the second will remind me of the third and fourth." During this process, he said, he became so familiar with many facts, that he could remember without any association at all. Again, in all the works and phenomena of nature, moral or physical, men of comprehensive minds discern a marked family likeness; certain facts

indicate the existence of others; so that memory is assisted by a certain key which classification suggests; and thus one effort of memory serves for all. Association and Attention are both the basis of several inventions called *Memoria Technica*, of which I will proceed to speak, more particularly for the benefit of students who would follow out my plan of attaining accuracy of outlines of history and other subjects.

Of *Memoria Technica*, the practice of almost all men of distinction coincides with the avowed opinions of Bacon and of Abercrombie, that the memory of such events as these systems teach is scarcely worth the process; and that the same degree of resolution which their use implies would supersede the necessity of them, except to that extent only to which every man of sense can, and commonly does, frame the best possible *Memoria Technica*, namely, one suited to his peculiar cast of mind. Of such kinds are the following:—

First. Looking at names in the index of a history, and following each separately through all the events with which it is connected. This plan with Herodotus and Thucydides I found invaluable. It aids Memory most powerfully, and leads to comparison and valuable reflection.

Secondly. Marking the names, words, or paragraphs, in your book, or numbering the separate

arguments by figures, 1, 2, and 3, in the margin. This I found useful, not only with history, but especially with Aristotle, and other works of science. It tends to distinct conception; to many casual associations; you sometimes fancy you see the page itself marked with your own fingers, and then one event reminds you of another; it also enables you easily to refresh your memory of a book while you leisurely turn over the pages; above all, it keeps ever present to your mind, what many students do not think of once a month, that reading and remembering are two different things.

Thirdly. Making a very brief summary of the contents of each book, and thinning it by degrees, as your memory can do, with few catchwords as well as many. This plan answers many of the same purposes as the preceding; it is valuable to one who is preparing himself to write off-hand the history of any particular century. Take one sheet of paper, and write words enough on it to remind you of the whole Outline History, and after a month, try if a much more portable *skeleton-key* will not serve, and this may be reduced, in its turn, till the whole is transferred from the paper to your memory. Thus Niebuhr advised his nephew to keep a list of difficulties or new words, and blot out each as soon as he could.

Lastly. Associating things with places or objects around : thus the Roman orators used to associate the parts of their speeches with the statues or pillars in the building in which they spoke. Let my readers prepare a "skeleton-key" of each of the Outline Histories, of England, Rome, and Greece, and take a walk in three different directions with each ; then will they find, though I cannot say in the noble sense in which Shakspeare intended,—

"Tongues in trees—books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones—and good in every thing."

Gray's "Memoria Technica" for dates is very useful. But it must be used for kings and queens only, the dates of other events being remembered by association.

Example is better than precept. What man has done, man may do ; so we will consider a few anecdotes of men famed for powers of memory.

Xenophon, in his "Symposium," speaks of Athenians who could repeat both the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey." This statement has been recommended to the consideration of those who assert the impossibility of the Homeric poems being orally transmitted. What was practicable for one man, however extraordinary a character he might be, would be comparatively easy for

a society of Rhapsodists, if each member were intrusted with the memory of a part.

The nation that exerts memory in a more surprising manner than any other at the present day, is the Chinese. Medhurst, in describing their education, enumerates nine books under the names of the "Five Classics" and the "Four Books." The Classics consist of a Book of Diagrams; a Collection of Odes; The Public Ceremonies; The Life of Confucius; and the History of the Three Dynasties. The Four Books are, The Happy Medium; The Great Doctrine; Book of Discourses; and Mencius. The bulk of these nine is equal to that of the New Testament; and yet, says Medhurst, "if the whole were lost, one million persons (out of a population reckoned at 361,000,000) could restore every volume to-morrow." Public offices in China depend on examination in these books. Two per cent. of the population compete.

At Winchester and the Charter House many a boy has committed to memory 10,000 lines, so as to repeat from any part at which he was told to begin.

Matthews, the comedian, as we are told by his widow, had so surprising a memory, that he would go through an entertainment which he had not seen for many months. He has even

been known to step aside as the curtain drew up, to ascertain by a play-bill the name of the piece advertised for the evening; and this, strange to say, at a time when he was suffering so much from cracks on the tongue that he had not spoken a word during the whole day, and felt the greatest pain in uttering what the audience were so delighted to hear.

Addison's daughter, said Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, was nearly imbecile, yet so powerful was her memory, that she could repeat a sermon which she had heard once, and could learn pages of a dictionary by heart.

It is related of Bolingbroke that he learned Spanish enough in three weeks to correspond with the Spanish minister. I would say *credit Judæus*—believe it who will—but in Sir J. Stephen's Essay on "Ignatius Loyola and the Jesuits," it is mentioned as indisputable that Xavier learnt one of the Indian languages, so as to prepare himself for his missionary duties, in the same space of time. This is an instance of the power that enthusiastic determination exerts over memory. To the same principle must we also attribute the fact that the Rt. Rev. the Bishop of New Zealand preached to the natives in their own language as soon as he arrived, having studied it only during his voyage. This, however, though highly merito-

rious, is by no means so surprising a case as that of Xavier.

It has been stated somewhere, that to the memory of Esdras we are indebted for the Hebrew Scriptures which were destroyed by the Chaldæans. St. Anthony, the Egyptian hermit, though he could not read, knew the whole Scripture by heart; while a certain Florentine, at the age of sixteen, could repeat all the Papal bulls and much more rubbish—a strange instance of misused talent! These and many other instances of memory are given in Millingen's "Curiosities of Medical Experience." Seneca tells us that the Emperor Hadrian could repeat 2,000 words in the order he heard them. Petrarch says that Pope Clement V. had his memory impaired by a fall on the head (an accident which has been known to give a good memory to one who had little before), and by great application gained so much more power than he had lost, that he never forgot anything he read. Cicero says, "Lucullus had a miraculous memory for events, but Hortensius had a better memory for words." Quintilian alludes to the well-known fact that we can repeat a task more perfectly on the following morning than on the night we learn it, and observes that things digest and settle in the mind during sleep.

Many instances are recorded of men losing the memory of a language, and speaking it many years after, during a brain fever or some exciting illness. The truth of this is beyond all doubt, though it seems very much like the tunes being thawed out of the frozen trumpet.

Dr. Abercrombie knew a lady seized with apoplexy while playing at cards one Thursday evening, and on regaining consciousness early on Sunday morning, her first words were, "What are trumps?"

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE OF FOREIGN PARTS. AD-
DRESSED BOTH TO THOSE WHO TRAVEL AND THOSE
WHO STAY AT HOME.

IN reading travels, as in travelling, an inquiring and reflecting mind is requisite to collect facts and draw conclusions. Much letter-press as well as much ground may be passed over without rendering us any wiser or any better. Readers, as well as travellers, differ widely in curiosity and observation; therefore as some tourists consult Guides and Handbooks to learn what to visit or for what to inquire, and others Miss Martineau, to learn "How to observe," so for those who have only the pleasure of thinking about travelling, perusing the tour of others, and laying down the exact route they would like to take, should some next-to-impossible contingency occur—to these speculative and fireside anglers in the wide waters of the round world, I will offer a few hints suited to every variety of taste, showing how to gain as much

knowledge as possible of foreign parts without foregoing the comforts of home.

Basil Hall advises a young midshipman to begin his career by "taking up a line;" that is to say, to resolve on building up a character either for practical seamanship, for science, generalship, or diplomacy; so readers of travels should begin with choosing a topic which every volume may contribute to illustrate. Instead of turning over thousands of pages without an object, they should keep some one subject uppermost in their thoughts, on which they should try to become so well informed as not only to be considered, but really to be, competent referees whenever any question arises concerning it. Take, for instance, one of the following topics:—

The history of man, or human nature under every variety of climate or influence, whether social or physical: the savage, the slave, the freeman, the heathen, the Christian.

The wonders of creation,—the animals, produce, natural phenomena,—storms, earthquakes, or eruptions, in every part of the world.

The arts and sciences,—literature, education, ingenuity, and points of superiority in different nations.

Each of these subjects I will consider separately, pointing out the capacity required for

each, and such authors as will be found most improving.

First. *As to the history of man.* This subject was chosen by Dr. Prichard, whose learned work remarkably exemplifies how to collect and classify information. The author appears to have read all the travels he could procure, to illustrate the modifying influence of physical and moral agencies on the different tribes of the human family. From his work it appears that, however much may be said about the artificial and unnatural habits that civilization produces, human strength, endurance, and longevity—to say nothing of the development of those capacities which are deemed the proper characteristics of man—are greater among civilized than uncivilized nations. This is a fact which the most ordinary reader would be curious to know: I have therefore selected it from a volume of deep and subtle investigation, to show with what care and interest we may illustrate a subject seemingly of deep philosophy. But these hints are intended, not for the learned, but the ignorant. Catlin's "Notes on the North American Indians," with 400 illustrations, contain a most curious history of a people now fast passing away. From these sources we learn that works of art, considered impossible under all the advantages of a civil-

ized state, are every day produced by the simple instruments of untutored nations. After reading Mr. Catlin's travels, and visiting his collection, I happened to take up Bremner's excursion in Russia, and shortly afterwards Davis's and Gutzlaff's account of the Chinese, which induced me to visit the Chinese Exhibition in London. Let any reader consider the effect which must be produced on the mind by the following observations relating to three races of men in distant parts of the world: First, Mr. Catlin showed an Indian bow which no turner in London could equal, and cloth of a texture which astonished the manufacturers of Manchester. Secondly, Mr. Bremner stated that the Russians, with no plane or line, nor any other tool than an axe, will cut with the greatest precision and join even edges. And thirdly, in the Chinese Exhibition appeared that varied collection of works of art too well known to need description. Again; how must the mind be opened and improved by comparing the different habits of life,—the food, the occupations, the character of these widely differing and distant nations. And how much more light will be thrown upon man's history, if in the life of Ali Pacha we read of the state of Egypt, and see how the annual negro-hunts are managed in this enlightened age. One who

has not read of the horrors of this chase has yet to learn how far it is possible for human nature, left to the feeble control of unenlightened conscience alone, without the chastening discipline of a Christian community, brutally to make prey of the flesh and blood of his fellow-man. In the extermination of the Red man by the encroachments of the colonists of America we learn more lessons of the same kind, though less cold-blooded and revolting. Borrow's "Gipsies in Spain," as well as his "Bible in Spain," which might as properly be entitled "Gipsy Adventures," together with the history of the "Thugs," or Indian Assassins, will all be valuable to those who think that "the proper study of mankind is man:" nor can any kind of reading afford more thrilling interest.

Secondly. *As to the wonders of creation and natural phenomena.* This, like the last, is a topic suited to every capacity,—to the philosopher, who needs no assistance, as well as to the general reader, who would beguile a winter's evening by gratifying his curiosity about the wide world and all things that are therein. A little book, entitled "Curiosities of Physical Geography," contains a good selection from the writings of travellers. But I shall mention other works presently.

Thirdly. *The arts, sciences, literature, and comparative superiority of different nations*, can also be studied by persons of various tastes and capacities. Some may compare the works of art and manual performance only, and see how little the pyramids of Egypt appear, in any thing but their uselessness, when compared with our mines and railways. The measurement of some of the tanks of India and the wall of China may be profitably remembered by reference to docks, canals, water-works, gas-pipes, and other machinery, with which we are acquainted. Again, those of maturer mind may regard rather moral and social, than physical, grandeur; and that, as I have before said, without any hints or direction from me. My intention is to prompt, encourage, and suggest the first attempts of a large class of readers, who are so diffident that they will scarcely believe they can attain the information which most of their friends possess. These humble aspirants should be told that many a naturalist, who has presented a valuable collection of fossils or other curiosities to a museum, has attributed all his eminence to some accident which induced him to make a store of birds' eggs or snail-shells at school: so many an author who has enlightened the world on matters of the highest interest has declared that he


felt unworthy of the honors conferred upon him, because he believed he owed all his success to some chance suggestion, lighter even than those now offered, which first directed attention to his favorite order of phenomena, and because the theory which he had originated was too obvious to be overlooked by any one who had collected the same class of facts under equal advantages. Most truly may it be said that men of genius will rarely believe an investigation to be impracticable to others which is easy to themselves: still it seems highly probable that a patient adherence to a mere mechanical system of study has often produced results, which, to those ignorant of the process, has seemed the work, not of industry, but of genius. "If I surpass other men," said Newton, "in any thing, it is in patient examination of facts."

To the preceding we may add one more subject of investigation, and one which many will prefer, namely,

Fourthly. *The general condition of every nation in respect of climate and civilization.* To readers who choose this topic I would recommend keeping either one large Mercator's chart, or a separate map of each quarter of the globe, on which to mark from time to time, by a peculiar color or other convenient sign, such countries as travellers' journals enable them to explore.

One of my friends had a map of England, on which he had colored each road he had travelled; every county of which he knew the habits of the people, or the produce and advantages of the soil; also each town of which he had studied the present prospects or past history. He had also marked with figures many of the towns, as being of the first, second, third, or fourth class, in respect of population, having first determined the numbers to constitute each class. Such methods are a strong incentive, both to deep research and methodical study; they forbid us to forget that we read, not to count volumes, but to store up knowledge. The maps we choose should be originally blank ones, representing *terra incognita*; a dark color may also be appropriate. We shall thus be prompted to study, that we may dispel this cloud which broods over the face of the earth, and diffuse instead some lively hue emblematic of the light of knowledge.

After all that I have said on other subjects applicable also to the study of travels, these few hints will serve as a sufficient clue to the shortest, safest, and most agreeable road to the knowledge which travellers can impart. Of all works which may be "skimmed," travels are those with which the reader may avail himself of this privilege with the clearest conscience.



He is not bound to read more than one passage across the Atlantic, one ducking at the Line, or one account of old tricks upon travellers: the table of contents will generally point out the parts worth reading. It is proverbial that travellers, in general, are not famed for accuracy, and are often partial and mistaken when they do not exaggerate; it is well, also, that a traveller's opinions be received with great caution, since, for the most part, their opinions are based on very little examination of the real facts of the case in hand. Indeed, this kind of literature in every respect requires much discrimination on the part of the reader.

Respecting choice of voyages and travels, I might refer the reader to any bookseller's catalogue; but, in compliance with the request of a few young friends, who assure me they represent a great many more, I add the following list, at the same time observing, that such parts of a volume as do not interest a reader, he will do well to pass over, for a time at all events.

To listen when the speaker speaks against time, and to read where (as is too common with travellers) the writer writes against space, are equally void of improvement.

First. For those who prefer voyages of discovery, whale-fishery, and all the phenomena and wonders of the deep, the voyages of Cook,

Parry, and Ross are to be preferred, because it is injudicious to remain ignorant of books which others know; Park's Travels in Africa ought to be read for the same reason.

The "Lives of Drake, Cavendish, and Dampier, with the History of the Buccaneers," form one small volume, well calculated to show the state of nautical affairs in early days. Cooper's Naval History will show what has been done in later times. .

The "Travels and Researches of Humboldt," being a condensed narrative of his journey in America and Asiatic Russia; a work greatly to be recommended; few travellers are quoted with more respect than Humboldt.

Besides these, "The East," by Rev. Dr. Spencer, is a compendious, and good narrative of Travel in Egypt and the Holy Land;

Warburton's "Crescent and the Cross;"

Bishop Wainwright's volumes on Egypt and the Holy Land;

Stephens's "Central America," and "Yucatan;"

Layard's Nineveh; also Babylon;

Lynch's Expedition to the Dead Sea;

Sir F. B. Head's "Emigrant;"

Lyell's "Travels in N. America;"

Mackenzie's "Year in Spain;"

"Borrow's Bible in Spain," and "Gipsies in

Spain;" Calvert's "Scenes and Thoughts in Europe;" Parkman's "Oregon Trail."

The above are well worth reading. A library catalogue will supply numerous others on any topic which the reader may fancy.

Secondly. As to manners, customs, and the general state of different nations,—these form more or less the subject of all travels; but more particularly—

"Catlin's Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, &c. of the North American Indians," above mentioned;

"Travels in North America, and a Residence among the Pawnee Indians," by the Hon. C. A. Murray;

"Visit to the Indians of Chili," by Captain Gardiner;

"General Description of China and its Inhabitants," by Davis;

"China Opened," by the Rev. C. Gutzlaff;

Callery and Yvan's Account of the Recent Insurrection in China;

Macfarlane's Japan and the Japanese;

"The Rural and Domestic Life of Germany," by W. Howitt;

"History and Present Condition of the Barbary States," with a view of their antiquities, arts, &c., by the Right Rev. M. Russell;

"Nubia and Abyssinia," by the same author;

"Russia and the Russians in 1842," by Kohl;
"Excursions in the Interior of Russia," by
Bremner; with an account of Nicholas and his
Court, and exile in Siberia;

"Journal of a Residence in Norway, in
1834," and "Sweden," by Samuel Laing;

Oliphant's "Russian Shores of the Black
Sea," in 1852;

W. W. Smyth's "A Year with the Turks."

All these works are of value and character,
and contain much to interest both old and
young.

Thirdly. For readers of mature mind, who
can enter into historical disquisitions and his-
torical reflections:—

Henry Wheaton's "History of the North-
men;"

Sir F. B. Head's "Rough Notes;" the "Pam-
pas and the Andes;"

Bishop Heber's "Journal;" (very elegantly
written, and generally admired, though few read-
ers receive from it very lasting impressions);

"Eothen;" by Mr. Kinglake;

"British India, from the most remote Period;
—Early Portuguese and English Voyages; Re-
volutions of the Mogul Empire; Accounts of
Hindoo Astronomy; Navigation of great Rivers
by Steam, &c.," by Jameson, Wilson, Dalrym-
ple, Murray, and others eminent for science;

— "Historical and Descriptive Account of Persia, Government Resources, Natural History, Wandering Tribes," by J. Baillie Fraser;

"Notes of a Traveller on the Social and Political State of France, Prussia, Switzerland, Italy, and other parts of Europe, during the present Century," by S. Laing;

"Tour to the Sepulchres of Ancient Etruria, in 1839," by Mrs. Hamilton Gray;

"Forest Scenes and Incidents in the Wilds of Canada," by Sir F. B. Head;

Waterton's "Wanderings in South America," describing the capture of rare Snakes and Birds; Natural History.

Fourthly. For those curious about ancient cities, ruins, and remains of bygone days:—

Stephens's "Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan," with numerous engravings;

"A Second Visit to the Ruined Cities of Central America," by the same author;

"Rambles in Yucatan; or Notes of Travel through the Peninsula, including a Visit to the remarkable ruins of Chi-chen, Kabah, Zayi, and Uxmal," by B. M. Norman;

Laborde's "Arabia Petræa, and the excavated City of Petra;" (very interesting and curious);

Layard's "Researches amid the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon;"

"Excursion in Asia Minor; including a Visit to several unknown and undiscovered Cities," by C. Fellows;

"Cairo, Petraea, and Damascus," described by J. G. Kinnear;

"Topography of Thebes, and General View of Egypt;"

"Eboracum; or York under the Romans," by Sir G. Wilkinson;

"Pompeii; an account of its Destruction and Remains;"

"Egyptian Antiquities," by Professor Long;

"Ruins of Ancient Cities," by Charles Buckly.

Fifthly. For the readers of Classical and Biblical literature:—

Sir A. Burne's "Travels to Bokhara and up the Indus" may be read in connection with the life of Alexander the Great;

Cramer's Asia Minor, Ancient Italy, and Greece, are chiefly valuable to the more accurate students of the classics;

"Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai, and Arabia Petraea, in 1838," by Rev. Dr. Robinson;

Wilson's "Travels in the Holy Land, Egypt, &c.;"

"Letters on the Holy Land," by Lord Lindsay; Lake's "Northern Greece;" also, "Topography of Athens and the Demi;"

"A Winter Journey through Russia, Caucasus and Georgia, thence across Mount Zagross, by the Pass of Xenophon, and the Ten Thousand Greeks," by Migdan ;

Wordsworth's "Athens;" also "Ancient Greece," and Eustace's "Classical Tour," above recommended.

Sixthly. For those who purpose travelling in their own country or abroad :—

Dr. Johnson has wisely said that no traveller will bring knowledge home who does not take knowledge out with him. I would therefore strongly recommend every tourist to inform himself of the government, constitution, resources, and general nature of the town, county, or country he intends to visit. The traveller should know what to look or inquire for, and should read sufficiently to understand common allusions to such events of the day, as every one with whom he converses will presume to be too familiar to need explanation.

Young persons cannot do better than avail themselves of all the illustrated works they can procure, as the most fertile source not only of rational amusement but of serious instruction. With the productions of the pencil, as with those of the pen, methodical application and careful comparison of things of the same class are essential to real improvement. By care-

lessly turning over prints to please the eye, without any effort of the mind, we cannot reasonably hope to receive distinct or lasting impressions. Views of foreign lands and famous cities will serve to fill up many a blank in an inquiring mind ; but, as I before said of the qualifications of a traveller, we must have a little knowledge when we begin, if we would retain any when we end.

"*Nil sine labore*" is true even of looking at pictures. Unless we read and reflect on the scenes we contemplate, and are contented to look only at a few at one time, we shall soon perceive that we have become more confused than informed, and parts of Italy, Spain, and Turkey will insensibly blend in the same picture.

In closing this chapter, let me recommend "Longfellow's Poets and Poetry of Europe," and Hedge's "Prose Writers of Germany." The first as giving the most complete series of specimens from the poetry of every nation in Europe ; and the latter, valuable extracts from the best German writers from Luther to the present time. Both affording valuable aid in becoming acquainted with the literature of these countries.

CHAPTER IX.

PHILOSOPHY, MORAL, POLITICAL, MENTAL
—LOGIC—METAPHYSICS.

PHILOSOPHY, my young friends, may seem to you a very hard term, and you may feel disposed to pass by this chapter as wholly unsuited to your taste or talents; but, if you will pay attention for a few minutes, it may appear that to think and reflect, not only on what you see, but on what you feel, and are conscious of as part of your own nature—in other words, to think about your thoughts and emotions (just as you think about your words and actions), and to examine curiously anything which seems remarkable in such thoughts and emotions or feelings,—you may find, I say, that this kind of exercise is not too severe for your mind when you read, as you should read, a little at a time. And should you be induced to try, the course of reading I have to propose, or indeed any one volume or subject, can hardly fail to

produce a very sensible effect upon your mind. For, let me ask, do you not remember some one of your acquaintance who is remarkable for giving a very favorable impression of his good sense and understanding to any person with whom he happens to converse, although only for a few minutes, and that too upon some topic that gives scope neither for general reading nor deep learning?

Now this mysterious influence, this weight of character, depends chiefly on the exact truth of our thoughts and of our words. "The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," should be the rule, not only of our legal evidence, but of the most casual of our daily remarks; and I believe that the degree of a man's conformity to this rule is the measure, mentally as well as morally, of his influence upon society. The world often pays homage to this truthfulness of thought and expression without knowing what they reverence. A certain plain and simple way of speaking, so generally admired, is nothing else but the language natural only to those who discern the exact truth of every question,—mean what they say, and say what they mean. Rugged sentences of outlandish words of many syllables, flowers, and figures of speech, never please, though many think it creditable to admire them. This

style is the reverse of the simple and the truthful, and is only natural to one who is more full of himself than of his subject.

To seek truth for truth's sake has therefore been the laudable object of those called philosophers, or lovers of wisdom, both in ancient and modern times. And if my youthful readers will follow the course of reading I have to propose, they can hardly fail to improve both in their own estimation and in that of their friends. To paint the surface of the human figure we must know anatomy, otherwise there will be a want of ease and true expression. To speak correctly on our thoughts and feelings, which directly or indirectly enter into almost every conversation, we must know the real nature of our feelings, or Moral philosophy, and the laws of thought, or Mental philosophy.

On MORAL PHILOSOPHY the most easy, plain, and intelligible work is that by Paley, which for vigor, freshness, ease, and perspicuity of style, as well as for aptness of illustration, is unrivalled; but many of its principles and definitions savor so much of casuistry that it is generally believed that Paley would have been incapable of writing so loosely at a later period of his life. This, indeed, is the remark of Professor Sedgewick, whose admirable lectures I should strongly recommend to be read in con-

nection with Paley's "Moral Philosophy."*

The moral essays of Johnson's "Rambler" and Addison's "Spectator" should next be selected; and then such of Bacon's Essays as appear from their title to relate to this subject.

Chalmers's "Bridgewater Treatise" contains most ingenious illustrations, and is on the whole well calculated to give information in an amusing way. The style unfortunately is turgid, and contains many words "not found in Johnson." Chalmers's object was to prove how admirably our hearts and minds are suited to the sphere in which we live.

So far I have only mentioned works nearly the whole of which a reader of ordinary intelligence and application might study. I do not presume that many will read all the volumes here recommended. Each may make choice of the chapters which are simple and entertaining enough to rivet his attention.

The following list is for those who have a more decided preference for philosophical works:—

Mackintosh's "Dissertations on the Study of Ethical Philosophy." This is an admirably comprehensive work, well suited as a guide to

* President Wayland's "Moral Philosophy" is very generally acceptable in our country.—AM. ED.

subsequent reading. For the same purpose some recommend

Beattie's "Principles of Moral Science," which have attained much celebrity, but less than

"The Philosophy of the Moral Feelings," by Abercrombie. Those, however, who would go to the fountain, should read

"Bishop Butler's Sermons." Dr. Chalmers and Sir James Mackintosh are both reputed to have said that nearly all they knew of moral philosophy they owed to Butler. The late Dr. Arnold also recommended it as one of the few works which we should never cease reading. An observation of this kind induced me, about ten years since, to study Butler till I was familiar with every page; and I can truly say, that the greater part of every book on moral philosophy, which has since fallen in my way, appeared as trite as a thrice-told tale, and a mere development of Butler's thoughts and paraphrase of his words. The reasoning of Butler, I must confess, is too abstruse for the minds of many. But, in the present day, few persons, really desirous of improvement, can be at a loss for occasional assistance from men of sound education. I knew an instance of a young lady who read these sermons with her brother, that she might receive an explanation of every difficulty. Mrs. Somerville truly remarks, as an encourage-

ment to her countrywomen to study science, that the degree of intelligence required to follow a theory is not to be measured by the genius originally required for its discovery : so, dissertations most perplexing of themselves may be very easy when we have a friend to put one argument in a different form, and another in different words. If any of my readers have a friend to take so kind a part, let them remember, that many persons of sound judgment have declared, that if there were one book of human composition which they felt more thankful to have read than another, it was Butler's Sermons. Such are the merits of this great work in respect to moral science.

Abercrombie's "Philosophy of the Moral Feelings" is a work of deserved celebrity. It is written in a clear and elegant style; brief, yet comprehensive, and suited to those who have only leisure to read a little.

John Foster's "Essays on Decision of Character" are admirable, and of the greatest interest to the class of readers now addressed; as also is

Taylor's "Natural History of Society," in which are considered the origin and progress of human improvement.

Dr. Moore has ably written on "The use of the body in relation to the mind."

Dr. Hampden's Article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* on Aristotle's Philosophy will convey much well-digested information on ancient ethics. To those who study Aristotle's *Ethics*,—I speak advisedly, with much experience, and on high authority, when I say, that—if they would select from the books here recommended all the chapters which treat on the same subjects as the several books of the *Ethics*, and if they would also accustom themselves to write *Ethical Essays*,—really *Ethical*, not Aristotelian,—they would almost certainly derive great advantage from so admirable a course of mental discipline and culture.

We will next consider the study of

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.—Our duties as citizens form one part of Paley's "*Moral and Political Philosophy*," above mentioned. Bishop Butler's Sermon before the House of Lords, on the 30th of January, 1740, and also Burke's "*French Revolution*," (albeit Fox said he disliked it as much as any writing by Paine,) form an invaluable study for youth and age.

On political economy, the most easy and instructive reading for young persons is found in the *Tales* by Miss Martineau. I knew a young lady who read the whole series with the greatest avidity, although she was not generally fond of study. The object of this authoress was, to

select the leading principles of Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," and show their operation in a village or other community, pleasantly and ingeniously represented, so as to show cause and effect, or the beginning and end, of each impolitic system.

For men of reflection, Adam Smith's work must be the grammar and groundwork of political economy. Miss Martineau has, like all other persons, male and female, who have the boldness to "go ahead," been ridiculed; nor must her peculiar opinions, which give a harsh and ungenial tone to her writings, be forgotten; still few persons are at once so deep and clear that they need disdain her assistance. It may be well also to read

The Life of Horner, in Brougham's "Statesmen," and Papers in the Edinburgh Review therein recommended, written in 1802-3-4.

On "Population," read Malthus, and the Reviews upon his Essay; also,

"Political Economy," by the same,

"Whateley's Introductory Lectures,"

"M'Culloch's Principles."

Mill's "Political Economy" is the most comprehensive since Adam Smith.

The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge has published "Political Philosophy, comprehending Principles of Government,

Monarchical Government, Eastern Monarchies, and European Monarchies."

The rise, progress, and practical influence of political theories, and the rise and growth of the continental interests of Great Britain, form the subject of a very popular work by Heeren, professor of history at Gottingen.

Lord Brougham has also published his opinions on political economy.

Besides, or instead of any or all of these, the articles on taxation, rent, or any other part of political economy, may be studied in the Cyclopædias. This subject, indispensable as it is for understanding the news of the day, is generally considered to be involved in deep mystery, which none but a chosen few can hope to penetrate. If there is any one subject on which it is desirable that all men should be informed, and on which almost all are ignorant, it is political economy. Most of the works above mentioned are suited to any ordinary capacity from beginning to end; nor is there one of which most young persons might not improve by the study of many portions.

We will next consider the writers on

MENTAL PHILOSOPHY and METAPHYSICS.—Abercrombie's work on the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth is the best for those who can read only one book.

Locke's work "On the Conduct of the Understanding" is brief, and easily intelligible. This, as well as many parts of "Watts on the Mind," is well suited to young persons. Those who would dip more deeply into Metaphysics should read

Cudworth's "Intellectual System," and

Reid's "Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man," to which is annexed an analysis of Aristotle's Logic;—these works will give a general knowledge of ancient Metaphysics;—then take "Bacon's Novum Organon."

Locke "On the Human Understanding," and the works of Thomas Brown and Dugald Stewart.

But it is not my purpose to attempt to lay down a plan for readers capable of profound investigations; I would only remind them of Sir J. Mackintosh's papers in the "Encyclopædia Britannica." His works have been published in three volumes. "Sewell's Christian Politics" is one of the ablest of modern compositions.

"The Natural History of Enthusiasm" is a very clever Essay, which has gained great celebrity to its author. He has also written, among other works,

"Fanaticism," and

"Physical Theory of another Life."

Many works on Insanity are very interesting

to the general reader—such as those by Munro, Mayo, and Willis. Of course it is not intended that, practically, works of this kind form part of the qualifications of any but professional men; still the facts on which the theories of every class of Physiologists are founded are so deeply interesting and generally useful, that they are supposed to be to some extent familiar to all persons of good education. In parts of Beck's "Medical Jurisprudence" you will find the tests of insanity, the kind of insanity by which persons are legally irresponsible, as well as many interesting cases, in which medical science has promoted the ends of justice.

Dr. Pritchard's "Different Forms of Insanity, in reference to Criminal Cases," contain many interesting passages. Works of this kind, the unprofessional will read like a newspaper, as they happen to have leisure and curiosity. In opening books of this and, indeed, of every other kind, we should consider that we dip into them with our minds as we would into a jar of filings with a magnet; more or less will adhere and be gathered together in proportion as the instrument has been previously charged. During the season of early education and discipline the mind must be forced and tasked; but when we read no longer to form but to fill the mind, we should be advised only so far as this: to open

a certain set of books, and examine their contents, resolving to close them when curiosity fails.

On GRAMMAR, LOGIC, and RHETORIC, the following will suffice. So many English Grammars have been published that it is by no means easy to point out the best. Latham's is good, so is Brown's, Smith's, &c. Latham's larger work, and Harrison on the English Language, ought to be consulted.

Dr. Crombie's "Etymology and Syntax of the English Language" is also in high repute.

On Logic, it will be sufficient to read Whateley's "Elements," or Mill's "System of Logic," or the Edinburgh Review, No. cxv.

On Rhetoric, read Whateley's "Elements," Campbell's "Philosophy of Rhetoric," and translations of Cicero, Quintilian, and Aristotle's "Rhetoric;" also Dr. Hampden's article upon the Rhetoric of Aristotle.

Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric, are three subjects on which those only who are naturally fond of science should study deeply. Still no one can be considered soundly educated who has not read and reflected on one treatise, at least, upon each subject.

Lastly. The best general History of Ancient Philosophy, Moral and Metaphysical, is that by Ritter, in 3 vols., translated from the German by Mr. Morrison, of Trin. Coll., Camb.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE FINE ARTS.

PAINTING, Sculpture, and Architecture, are three subjects on which nearly all persons of polite education, professional or unprofessional, feel compelled to conceal ignorance, if they cannot display knowledge. It is not my purpose to minister to the vanity of those who pick up the names of a few ancient masters or galleries, and affect to be connoisseurs; but two or three simple directions for attaining the elements of criticism and a general history of art may be profitable in various ways. It will save us from that shame and confusion which we should otherwise feel when the fine arts form the subject of conversation; it will enable us to understand the elegant illustrations which authors commonly derive from the arts; it will qualify us to profit by the conversation of men of taste, giving a nucleus for gathering a new kind of matter, drawing forth a new power of the mind, and opening to us a never-failing

source of the purest pleasure and refinement.

I trust I may encourage my young friends with the assurance that, great as is the advantage of cultivating a taste and acquiring knowledge of the fine arts, this to many minds is a work of very little time or toil. It consists more in observation than in reading, and in opening our eyes and ears with eager curiosity on occasions in which they are very frequently closed or turned away. Indeed, so prevalent is the opinion, that to judge of any picture, statue, or piece of architecture, requires some innate qualities with which only a chosen few are endowed, that many persons possessing not less judgment but more honesty than their neighbors, confess that for them to visit works of art is mere waste of time, that they know what is pleasing to themselves, but cannot venture an opinion, being aware that such things are not within the sphere of their understanding. The large class of readers who will see themselves in this representation may be assured that they have formed a very unfair estimate of their own capacities; and that with a little attention to the following directions, they may be better qualified to give an opinion of works of art than many of the most confident connoisseurs of their acquaintance.

We will begin with PAINTING.

First, Request some intelligent friend, who is fond of drawing and examining pictures, to accompany you to some extensive collection, and improve the opportunity according to the suggestions of the following anecdote:—

A youth of my acquaintance, who had been more than once in the National Gallery, without seeing the peculiar merit of any of the pictures, chanced to visit them in company with a professional painter of correct judgment and good common sense. He observed, on entering, that he knew nothing of the value of paintings, and would gladly receive a little general instruction. The painter told him to look at each picture attentively, compare it with what he knew of nature, and say honestly, not what others thought, or what he had heard or read, but simply what impression it produced on his own mind. The opinions so elicited proved nearly all to savor of truth. In some instances, the artist told him to consider if he was conversant with nature under the peculiar forms represented, and whether he knew how much lay within the sphere of art; at the same time observing that these two points would require a comparison of paintings, first with nature and then with each other. With such hints and cautions was this youth restricted to judging on such points only as were within the range of

ordinary judgment. If he felt encouraged by the frequent corroboration of his own opinions by those of the artist, he was yet more prompted to the full use of his faculties and open expression of his sentiments, by the repeated assurance that nature had made nearly all persons judges to a certain extent, and that if any were disqualified to give an opinion of her imitators, they were generally to be found among a certain set of pretending connoisseurs, whose vanity had led them so long to appropriate the sense and opinions of others, that they had lost the free use of their own. On that day my friend discovered how much he knew about paintings, and the precise points in which he was deficient; namely, that he wanted a more intimate and extensive acquaintance with nature, a knowledge of the limits of art, and correct standard of excellence in each kind of painting, as also the leading principles of perspective and composition. These are the chief points in which most common observers are deficient; therefore,

Secondly, Accustom yourself to observe landscapes, figures, &c. in nature, and compare them with paintings of similar subjects. To appreciate, for instance, the famous sea-pieces by the Vanderveldes, you must observe the degree of buoyancy in ships upon the water, of distinct-

ness in the outlines and picturesque swelling of the sails ; and so also, with reference to other pictures, observe the clouds, the tints of evening, and the foliage at different seasons, and, indeed, all other things, which works, below mentioned, will suggest.

Thirdly, Compare the works of those who have treated the same subject with different degrees of excellence. Do not join in decrying modern pictures, unless you can discern their peculiar points of inferiority. Universal censure and universal praise are equally unphilosophical, and far from truth ; both must be qualified. More knowledge is required to point out beauties than defects. Things are good and bad by comparison ; we must therefore study the best specimens of each kind of pictures, till they are firmly impressed upon our memory, so as to serve as a common measure or standard of excellence by which to value all others of the same class.

Fourthly, We must take every opportunity of conversing and comparing our own opinions with those of others, or, which is the same thing, after seeing several pictures by Claude or Titian, for example, we may read some account of their characters and criticism on their style. There is no want of critical discussions on the styles of the ancient masters ;

every picture of celebrity has been the subject of an essay. And as to the practicability of obtaining the advantage of conversation with those thoroughly conversant with art, it must be observed, that men are generally communicative on the subject of their favorite studies. It is natural with men to take an interest in those of similar taste. Doubtless the Creator ordained this sympathy between those capable of instructing each other, as a provision for the improvement of society. At all events, believe me, there is such an instinct, and a really teachable spirit can generally find a master. Besides, as to paintings of genius, their admirers say that every time they examine them they discover new beauties, and that ordinary observers frequently point out a touch of nature which the professed artist has overlooked. Again, it is not absolutely necessary that you should meet an artist in a picture-gallery to gain much of the assistance he is able to afford. Whenever you meet a man of taste in company, the drawing-room table will be found furnished with some book of prints taken from the works of ancient masters, which will readily furnish the occasion and the subject of a lecture. Young ladies, I am sure, can never be at a loss to improve such opportunities. And as to gentlemen, especially those who have money at

command, if they will only inquire for one of the many ill-paid but well-deserving artists, they may receive such *peripatetic* lectures, in some of the larger Galleries, as will be a very valuable initiation into the secrets of art. Indeed, most happy should I be, if, by this casual observation, I could open a new and honorable source of emolument to a class of men who conduce very much to the refinement and ornament of life, and receive very little in return. How many hundreds are there in our large cities whose fathers have earned fortunes which they are squandering, and to whom it would, if they only thought of it, be a pleasure to be lionized for two or three mornings, by a person well qualified to inform and amuse them! How many of those who are called callous, selfish, and indifferent to all wants but their own, have quite heart enough to confess that they would feel an extra relish in their own dinner, if they had earned an appetite in a way that provided a more generous meal to one who had as much sensibility, though less comfort, than themselves!

Whether my readers adopt this or any other method of improvement, they should bear in mind that their object must not be to gain mere critical knowledge, and the terms and mechanical part of the art of painting. In this point

of view a house painter would be nearly as good a teacher as an artist. But they should endeavor to gain a correct taste of beauty and propriety of expression, as well as a due appreciation of that invention and grandeur of conception which distinguishes the highest specimens of art. Sir W. Scott showed that he knew the spirit in which pictures were to be studied, when he said that those of Sir David Wilkie gave him new ideas;—that there are ideas in pictures is a fact which many persons have yet to learn. But I must trust to works which will shortly follow, to show how paintings by men of genius are to be read almost like a poem, and that the conceptions of a grand imagination and select delineation of nature's beauties are the subject-matter of painter and poet alike, though the one conveys them with the pencil and the other with the pen.

I will now enumerate the books best suited to give a general knowledge of art.

Sir Joshua Reynolds's "Discourses to the Students of the Royal Academy" have been lately published, illustrated by explanatory notes and plates by J. Burnet, F. R. S. Sir Joshua, it must be observed, was a very accomplished scholar. Before Edmund Burke published his "Letters on the French Revolution," he submitted them to Sir Joshua's consideration.

- All of these discourses show a very superior mind, and are valuable to students of every kind of art and literature. I have scarcely known any questions arise concerning the limits and province of the imaginative arts, which
- these writings do not tend to elucidate. The following topics may serve as a specimen:— How to “snatch a grace beyond the reach of art;” different stages of art; selecting better than copying; how to gain the materials of knowledge; of the grand style; of beauty; general nature to be distinguished from local fashion; the meaning of invention; exact copying of nature, not properly to be called natural; genius begins where art ends; meaning of taste; standard of taste; the style and characteristics of each school and ancient master, &c.

At the same time that we read Sir Joshua's Discourses, and all other lectures or essays on art, Pilkington's “Lives of the Painters” will be a useful hand-book. Of this there is a good abstract, in one small volume, by Dr. Shepard, who selected and abridged 100 out of 1400 of the lives written by Pilkington. This is quite comprehensive enough for general purposes. I would recommend the student to procure an interleaved copy, and take it with him, as a convenient catalogue and critique, when he visits collections of paintings. For, suppose he sees

some paintings by Claude or Titian, by turning to their respective biographies he will have his attention directed to the peculiar characteristics of the style of each. He will feel an interest in making a memorandum, as that such a landscape is in such a gallery, or that such a picture more or less exemplifies any critical remark. While reading or looking over a catalogue of an exhibition which he has not yet visited, he can write down the place where any celebrated picture may be seen on some future occasion.

It may be useful here to enumerate the several schools of painting. These are—

The Roman school, comprehending Raphael, Cherubino Alberti, Giovanni Alberti, Caravaggio, Gauli, Michael Angelo Campidoglio, Carlo Maratti, Andrea Sacchi :

The Venetian school, in which are, Titian, Annibal Caracci, Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese, Ludovico Caracci, Giocomo Bassano, Francesco Bassano, Francisco Bolognese :

The Florentine school, with Michael Angelo Buonarrotti, Andrea del Sarto, Leonardi da Vinci :

The Bologna school, with Guido, Albano, Domenichino, Guercino, Lanfranc, Correggio :

The Flemish and Dutch, of which are Rubens, Vandyck, Rembrant, Teniers, Godfrey

Kneller, Wouvermans, Vanderveldt, Albert Durer, Hans Holbein, Sir Peter Lely:

The French school, with Poussin, Le Brun, Perrier, Fresnoy, Claude:

The Spanish school, of which are Murillo, Ximenes, Velasquez, Gallego: and others in each school too many to mention.

Of the English school, the most remarkable are the following, noticed in Allan Cunningham's "British Painters:"—Jameson, the Scotch Vandyck; Verrio, La Guerre, and Thornhill, architectural painters; Hogarth, Wilson, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Ramsay (Scotch), Romney, Runciman (Scotch), Copley, Mortimer, Raeburn (Scotch), Hoppner, Owen, Harlow, Bonington, Cosway, Allan, Northcote, Sir T. Lawrence, Sir H. Beaumont, who aided in forming the National Gallery, Liverseege, Burnet, Fuseli, West, Bird, Barry, Blake, Opie, Morland.

Of the painters of later days, Mr. Bulwer, in his "England and the English," enumerates, in historical painting, Haydon, Hilton, Westall, Etty, Martin; in portrait painting, Owen, Jackson, Pickersgill, Philips; in fancy painting, Wilkie, Maclise, Parris, Howard, Clint, Webster, Newton; in landscape painting, Turner, Stanfield, Fielding, Callcott, J. Wilson, Harding, Stanley, besides Landseer, Roberts, Prout,

Mackensie, Lance, Derby, Cooper, Hancock, Davis.

The following is a list of books which may be considered necessary to be consulted in order to become a judge of painting :—

Vasari's "Lives;" Sandrart's "Lives of Painters;" Du Piles's ditto; Lord Orford's, 4 vols.; "Vertue's Life;" "Gilpin on Prints;" Dallaway's "Anecdotes;" Cochin's "Travels through Italy," 3 vols. *French*; "Richardson on Painting;" Raphael Mengs's "Works," 2 vols.; Winckelman's "Works." Forty years ago these were probably the best works; but all that is valuable in them has doubtless been adopted by later authors. The three following works are still popular :—Sir J. Reynolds's "Lectures," above mentioned; Cumberland's "Lives of Spanish Painters," and Fuseli's "Three Lectures;" a copy of the last, is published in the "Life of Fuseli."

I have before said that a continual comparison of pictures with nature and with each other is the chief source of knowledge; still some books will quicken our observation both of nature and of art; of these the best, next to the Discourses of Sir Joshua, are—

"Criticism on Art," and "Sketches of the Picture Galleries of England," by Wm. Hazlitt.

This contains catalogues of the principal galleries.

Mrs. Jameson's "Handbook to Public Galleries of Art," in or near London, and "Sacred and Legendary Art."

"Painting and Fine Arts," by R. B. Haydon and W. Hazlitt.

"Book of the Cartoons," by the Rev. R. Cattermole.

"Modern Painters," by a Graduate of Oxford, is a work of much talent, and admired by the first judges of English writing.

The Works of Hogarth, with explanations of each plate, have been published in the "Penny Magazine;" but more completely in fifty-two numbers by John Nicholls, F. S. A. Of all the paintings in the National Gallery those of Hogarth are examined by the greatest number of persons. This observation was confirmed by one of the attendants.

Allan Cunningham's "British Painters," is a book of much general information. The same author has written a "Life of Sir David Wilkie." Much may also be derived from the "Life of Titian;" "Life of Sir Thomas Lawrence;" "Life of Fuseli."

We will next consider

The ART OF SCULPTURE, though comparatively little remains to be said. By cultivating

a taste for the highest order of painting, which is characterized, not by meretricious ornament but grandeur of conception and simplicity of execution, we shall not be at a loss to judge of sculpture.

The history of sculpture is very fully given in the "Penny Cyclopædia." You will there find an enumeration of all traces of the arts found in Scripture. The extent to which it flourished among the Hebrews, Babylonians, and Phœnicians being little known, is the subject of only a few pages; but the style of sculpture, at different periods, among the Persians, Egyptians, Etrurians, Greeks, and Romans, admits of being illustrated with reference to existing remains. Of each of these schools, therefore, we have a succinct account. The history of Greek sculpture is written with peculiar care, and in the space of a few double-columned pages the reader may have a clear general view of this interesting subject. The revival of the art in Italy is usually ascribed to the tenth or eleventh century, though Flaxman traces it from the age of Constantine. Fuseli remarks that the arts have never been wholly lost in Italy, because there many barbarians had been long used to behold works of art while serving in the Roman armies, and were thus animated with a nobler spirit than the less

disciplined invaders of other lands. Be this as it may, the history of the revival is given in the same article, nearly down to the present time. I can recommend also the articles on Bronze, Polycletus, Phidias, Phigaleian Marbles, Elgin Marbles, Townley Marbles, Praxiteles, Benvenuto Cellini.

Allan Cunningham's "Lives of the British Sculptors" in the "Family Library" contains a good account of British art.

The "Encyclopædia Britannica" has also an article on sculpture, with more criticism than that in the "Penny Cyclopædia." It is illustrated by plates, which, indeed, are almost indispensable for any essay on art which is not purely historical. Many works above mentioned, especially those of painting, throw light upon the art of sculpture: this will appear even from their titles. Mrs. Gray's "Etruria," Sir G. Wilkinson's "Egyptians," and Dr. Wordsworth's "Illustrated Greece," of course supply the best possible information on Etrurian, Egyptian, and Grecian art respectively.

Flaxman's "Lectures and Illustrations of Hesiod, Homer, Æschylus, and Dante" are beyond all praise. "The Life of Flaxman" and of every other sculptor will convey much general information. I have only to add, that the British Museum, Westminster Abbey (of which

a history has been written by Smith, Flaxman, and others), and almost every cathedral, will not fail to improve a visitor who carefully examines and compares every piece of sculpture, and takes the earliest opportunity, on his return home, to correct his own observations by conversing with men of taste, or by reading critical essays on the respective artists.

Lastly, on ARCHITECTURE. The same remarks as to method, prints, illustrated works, general observation, conversing with men of taste, will of course apply to this subject.

To begin with a general view, take the article on Architecture, contained in a few pages of Chambers's "Information for the People." In this we have an outline, and by means of its many simple woodcuts may learn to distinguish the several orders and styles. Study this paper till you have a clear and comprehensive knowledge of its contents; and from that moment you will be much more competent to speak of architecture than most of your neighbors; so rare is it to find persons conversant with the shortest treatise, even of an easy and interesting subject.

Secondly, take Barr's "Anglican Church Architecture," which contains also interesting details of ecclesiastical furniture: Bloxam's "Gothic Architecture," is also very clearly writ-

ten: both of these works have numerous engravings. As a companion or dictionary for constant reference

"The Glossary of Architecture" is admirable: this contains explanations of the terms used in Grecian, Roman, Italian, and Gothic architecture, with 700 woodcuts: 400 additional examples to the same work have lately been published separately. For further information read the paper on "Gally Knight's Architectural Tour," No. CXXXIX. of the "Edinburgh Review;" and others which may be found both in that and the "Quarterly." Also, the Cyclopædias, under the terms Architecture, Arch, Architrave, Ionian, Corinthian, Pæstum, and under the name of any famous building, temple, &c.

Gwilt's "Encyclopædia of Architecture."

Read also, the lives of William of Wykeham, Inigo Jones, Sir Christopher Wren, Sir J. Vanbrugh, James Gibbs, William Kent, and Sir W. Chambers, etc.

When the student of the Fine Arts has fully availed himself of all these hints, he may be safely trusted to run alone, and choose works by the names of their Authors and their Titles from the classified Catalogue.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WAY TO STUDY THE SCRIPTURES.

IF my readers have not "an understanding heart," they stand in need of spiritual assistance, and must seek it where alone it is to be found, before they can be ever qualified to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the Holy Scriptures. For they are, as says the Apostle, *spiritually discerned*. None but those of poetical taste can appreciate the poetry of Scripture: none but those of musical taste can appreciate the flow of its most harmonious periods, though aided by all the powers of music. The poet has a natural sympathy for the one, and the musician for the other. Can the sluggard and the drunkard enter into your meaning when you speak of the pleasures of the temperate man as he goes forth to hear the carol of the lark, and breathe the fresh incense of the morning? Can the young appreciate the sober cautions and chastened judgment of age? Can the old enter into the buoyant hopes and bright

visions of youth? If not, what do these instances prove? One lesson is taught by each: namely, that our enjoyment or appreciation of every pleasure depends on a certain discernment, habit, or other qualification in ourselves, and therefore the mind best adapted to judge of one may be no kind of measure of another.

May we not, then, suppose that spiritual things also require a peculiar discernment, habit, or other qualification? For spiritual things are of the nature of deep counsel and eternal truth, which require the humble and teachable disposition of age: secondly, they savor of all that is pure, simple, and in the best sense, natural, so require the wholesome taste of chastened temperance: thirdly, they are of the nature of what is most lovely, noble, exalted, and divine; they require a spirit of holiness, fervent piety, and thoughts above mere things of earth. It appears, then, that under the name of Spiritual are included several orders of things, of which each is allowed to require a peculiar taste or other qualification, taken separately; much more, then, shall a peculiar qualification be required for enjoying, improving by, or entering into the spirit of the same things taken collectively. Spiritual things, therefore, can only be understood in a

peculiar way : they are not intellectually discerned ; but, as says the Apostle, they are "spiritually discerned ;" that is, they are discerned, understood, and appreciated only by those in whom there is a heart in sympathy, in unison, and in harmony with them.

However, the advice I propose to give concerns the mind. I must therefore presume that my readers have, to some extent, the necessary qualification for studying the holy writings, and proceed to offer some suggestions for improving by what the Scriptures address both to the mind and to the soul, without further caution or comment.

An excellent method of studying the Scriptures, then, is to select a copy of the Bible not larger than an octavo, with as much margin as possible. The one I use has uncut edges and flexible back, a minion 8vo., without marginal references. If you use a 4to. volume, you will not so readily turn to parallel verses. A large Bible is best for reading aloud, but a small Bible for the study. Marginal references every student blessed with a sound and active mind will find great profit in making for himself. When you make a study of the Scriptures, read with pen in hand ; and decide on a few simple marks to affix to verses which are most important, as supporting doctrines proving the genu-

iness or authenticity of any part of Scripture, or requiring further thought or illustration. These marks will enable you to refresh your recollection of any book of the Bible in a very short space of time. In my Bible the letters *T* mark passages most suitable for the text of a sermon, or for a rule of daily conduct. *Q* marks a difficulty, for further consideration or inquiry. When any new commentary falls in my way, I can at once test its value by passages of real difficulty. *Ch.* denotes a verse relating to the Church.

It is advisable, every time you read a book of Scripture, to propose one subject for particular attention. Read the Gospels, once to see wherein they agree and wherein they differ, and mark *M. Mk. L. J.*, or any other or more of these initials, according as St. Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John have also mentioned any parable, miracle, or other memorable part of our Lord's history occurring in the Gospel before you. Read them a second time for internal evidence of their truth. A third time with a Diatessaron, to mark the order of events or any other matter of instruction. To those fond of literature, the Scriptures will have also another and a wholly different value for literary and secular purposes; for the Bible is allowed to be the most curious book in the world. It

contains more knowledge of life and of the human heart, than all the writings of Shakespeare, Horace, Clarendon, Thucydides, and as many others as we please to mention. It comprises all that was discovered and much more that was overlooked, by the moral philosophers of ancient and modern times. And the proof is this:—Butler may be said to have been the corrector of the ancient ethical writers. Mackintosh, Robert Hall, and Dr. Chalmers, no inconsiderable writers of modern times, acknowledge that they were taught by Butler, and Butler has no pretension to have been taught otherwise than by Scripture. Well, then, might the Rev. H. Melville say, "It is a truth made known to us by God, and at the same time demonstrable by reason, that in going through the courses of Bible instruction, there is a better mental discipline, whether for the child or for the adult, than in any of the cleverly devised methods for opening and strengthening the faculties."

It is advisable, however, to bear in mind when we take up the Scriptures to gather the precious seed and when to examine the husk—when to read the Word and when the letter; and since it is allowable in a proper spirit to improve the mind as well as the heart, and since ignorance of the Scriptures, in the present

state of society, is happily accounted a disgrace, no less to the scholar than the man, it is convenient for literary purposes to keep a separate copy, in which to enter observations, as we read of Oriental customs, Jewish Antiquities, Natural History of the Bible, or anything else illustrative of Scripture. To show the interest and the great satisfaction which may arise from being thus attentive in the pursuit of knowledge, I will select from one of my own Bibles a few notes, which, without the method I recommend, might pass unheeded through the mind.

Acts xxviii. 13. "*Fetched a compass.*" A friend, in making the same voyage from Syracuse to Rhegium recently, observed that a considerable *sailing round*, as the Greek means literally, was unavoidable.

Deut. xxviii. 65-67. The text of the conscience-stricken Dr. Dodd the Sunday before he was apprehended for forgery, "The Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart," &c.

Gen. viii. 9. The *dove*. Dr. Meuse says that the North American Indians have a tradition of a *big canoe*, in which came *eight persons* across the water, *caused by the Great Spirit*. They hold the willow sacred, because *a dove flew with it from the canoe*.

The 46th Psalm was Luther's favorite; the

15th, Feltham's; the 103d and 145th, Hannah More's: the 139th, she said, "surpassed any of Pindar's." The best translation of the 139th, "By the rivers of Babylon," was by Camoens while in exile.

John i. 1. At Otaheite, the names of the superior deities are the Father, the Son, and the Friend Bird, which inspires the priests.—*Serle's Horæ Solitariae*.

Job xxix. This chapter moved Sir J. Mackintosh to tears on his death-bed.

These instances will exemplify my meaning.

Again, the poetry of the Bible and the beauties of natural and simple diction deserve attention. To commit them to memory is the best exercise for the improvement of taste. Wordsworth once remarked that he knew no poetry finer than that of Jeremiah. Mrs. Hemans justly preferred St. John to the other Evangelists. Coleridge considered the "Epistle to the Romans" the finest of St. Paul's compositions. The "Epistle to the Ephesians" exhibits a train of thought as far superior to ordinary minds and motives as anything ever written. These are hints for the exercise of criticism.

Whenever you read, compare Scripture with Scripture. Commentaries, at best, are only like advisers, who may assist for the moment, but never yet made any man wise. . While you

trust to commentators, you will never gain the full use of the faculties which God has given you; nor indeed can you hope to enjoy anything better than a flat, insipid, spiritless, dilution of scriptural truth. With respect to the difficulties of Holy Writ, either they can be solved in an obvious and satisfactory way or they cannot. If they can, a person of ordinary understanding, by examining the context and seeking similar expressions, may solve the difficulties as well as any commentator; if they cannot, the opinions of commentators, though sometimes instructive, are frequently of little use, differing widely from each other, being enveloped in a cloud of words, and more fanciful than reasonable. On these grounds I maintain that one hour's study with marginal references is worth ten with notes. Compare verse with verse, and let your maxim be, in all ordinary cases, "Every reader his own commentator."

Learn by heart one verse of the Bible every day. One of my friends takes the first verse which meets his eye as the Bible happens to open. A better plan is to mark the verses you prefer in several books, and learn them in order. If you are not contented with one, choose a second or a third from a different part; but do not impose too much upon yourself at first. The

great thing is never to omit one verse each day. Do not despise the importance of this method ; still less the self-command which constancy in its performance requires. I warn you that it is not very easy to learn 365 verses in the year without being once in arrears. If you miss a day, do not allow yourself to make it up ; but let the inequality between the number of verses and of days continue as a punishment. Perseverance and regularity will insure such knowledge of the more familiar texts of Scripture as experience alone can render credible. But remember that all depends on the regularity and uninterrupted habit. Mark the 30 or 31 verses on the first day of each month, and consider you have failed, unless the number of the day and of the verse are the same. The Hebrew or Greek version is of course to be preferred by scholars ; still none should omit the English.

One of my friends, a young lady, takes much interest in writing out the verses to which the marginal references of the Bible allude. Her paper is ruled by the stationer with one vertical column about two inches wide, for the text ; the rest of the page has horizontal lines. One line also guards the margin that the work may in future years admit of being bound. This is a much more profitable employment than knitting, though ladies may be allowed to do both.

Who would not be more proud of a mother who bequeathed him a commentary than a quilt?

Another exercise, really invaluable—to clergymen especially—is to make a scriptural common-place book. This will require the use of two books,—one as a day book, another as a ledger. The day book must be always at hand as you read the Bible from end to end. In this you will write down promiscuously any illustration of the divine attributes, faith, justification, types, prophecies, and innumerable other topics, as you please. Then in your ledger you will enter each of these under its proper head, which you will also notice with the number of the page in the index. A small work of this kind has been published by Chalmers.

Lastly, attend particularly to the style, dates, and proofs of the genuineness and authenticity of the several books of Scripture; and read the history of the different translations. For this purpose Horne's "Introduction," or Nichols's "Help to Reading the Bible," will be found in general quite sufficient.

I might extend this chapter very considerably, and to many, I dare say, very profitably, by giving a list of works on various branches of theological study, as commentaries, doctrinal

works, critical digests, &c. ; but I apprehend it is quite inexpedient. In a course of reading for students in general, without reference to their religious sentiments, it seems needless, to say the least, to enter particularly into matters on which Christians in this country are extensively divided, and respecting which they will properly seek instruction and guidance elsewhere. It will be a great point gained if I have suggested any thing by which the Word of God shall be studied more diligently and earnestly than is usual with very many among Christians in our day.

R*

CHAPTER XII.

ON THE STUDY OF POETRY.—CRITICISM. —TASTE.

“JOHNSON'S *Lives of the Poets*” will serve as a handbook or guide to the poets.

Of *Chaucer*, few read more than one or two tales as a specimen.

Spenser will improve taste—an author whom men of deep poetic feeling fondly read, and others distantly admire.

Shakspeare no one, probably, will ever wish to cease reading: it is best to begin with the tragedies.

Cowley, Waller, Philips, Parnell, Rowe, Prior, Gay, Green, Tickell, Somerville, Swift, Collins, Dyer, Churchill, Akenside, Lyttleton, Armstrong, J. Warton, T. Warton, Mason, Beattie, are authors of whom those of limited opportunities may be contented to read such parts only as Johnson or other critics point out.

Of *Milton*, to read “*Paradise Lost*” is the duty of all—the pleasure of few. Fuseli

thought the second book the grandest effort of the human mind. All the minor works are better known than "Paradise Regained."

Of *Dryden*, "Alexander's Feast" is one of the most popular lyric odes. His "Fables," "Annus Mirabilis," and "Translation of Virgil," are the most celebrated. Dryden is considered to evince more strength and real poetry, with less smoothness, than Pope. Bolingbroke admired his prose writing. Mackintosh thought "The Cock and the Fox" Dryden's best poem.

Of *Addison*, read the "Cato," and Psalm xxiii.

Of *Pope*, the "Rape of the Lock" is the best of all heroic, comical poems; "Abelard and Eloisa" is, though very clever, a most immoral and impious poem, most unworthy of the author of "The Messiah," which should be learned by heart, and compared with Isaiah and Virgil. The "Essay on Criticism," and "Dunciad," show that Pope could write as strong lines as any writer. Of the "Essay on Man," the argument was written by Bolingbroke, and versified by Pope.

✓ Of *Thomson*, all admire the sensibility and natural beauty of "The Seasons." He had not the art of giving effect with a few touches. His "Castle of Indolence" shows more genius, though less known.

Of *Shenstone*, Gray said, "He goes hopping along his own gravel walk, and never deviates from the beaten track, for fear of being lost." "The Schoolmistress" is one of the best imitations of Spenser.

Of *Young*, "The Night Thoughts" hold a high place among devotional poetry. Most of the literary world read part, few read all: which, indeed, may almost be said of Milton, for reasons given in Johnson's "Life of Milton."

Of *Gray*, the "Elegy," and "Ode to Eton College," are best known. Of the rest of his odes, Sir J. Mackintosh truly said, "They are most pleasing to the artist who looks to structure." And again, "To those who are capable of that intense application, which the higher order of poetry requires, and which poetical sympathy always produces, there is no obscurity."

Of *Goldsmith*, "The Deserted Village," next to Gray's "Elegy," is the most popular piece of English poetry. The other poems are much read.

Of *Johnson*, "London," and "The Vanity of Human Wishes," much admired by Byron, every scholar should compare with the third and tenth satires of Juvenal. His prologue, spoken by Garrick in 1747, is very good.

Of *Cowper*, "The Task" is considered the

master-piece. All his poems are much read, especially Alexander Selkirk, John Gilpin, and all the smaller pieces. Cowper, like Euripides, was remarkable for reconciling poetical sentiment with the language of common life. He may be considered the first of the school of Wordsworth. His letters are equal to any. Few poets have had more readers than Cowper. The public say of poetry as cottagers of religious tracts, "We like something with a tale in it." Of later writers *Wordsworth* assumes a high rank. See Coleridge's "Biographia Literaria." Read "The Excursion."

Crabbe's "Phœbe Dawson" was read to Fox on his death-bed! Of the "Borough" Mackintosh said what Pitt observed of Sir W. Scott's "Minstrel"—"I acknowledge his unparalleled power of painting."

Of *Coleridge*, Scott said translation was his forte. He translated *Wallenstein* from manuscript, and Schiller adopted and printed some of Coleridge's deviations. The "Ancient Mariner," composed during an evening walk with Wordsworth, as well as his "Christabel," are very celebrated. Mackintosh said Coleridge's "talents were below his understanding; he had never matured his ideas, so as to express them with clearness and order." Burns, Byron, Moore, Southey, Sir W. Scott, Rogers, L. E. L.

(Letitia Elizabeth Landon), Heber, Milman, Mrs. Hemans, Keats, James Montgomery, are names which I need only mention, although in mentioning I warn the reader against poets of the loose principles of Byron, Moore, and such like. The reader may easily learn the names of the best pieces of each; and when he thinks he knows their several styles, then he may read with interest the "Rejected Addresses," and try how many of the supposed authors he can identify. Alfred Tennyson, the poet-laureate, ranks among the first English poets of the present day.

Among American poets it seems hardly necessary to specify by name; still it may be well for the younger reader to take occasion to look into the poetry, and read, as occasion or taste may serve, from Dana, Bryant, Sprague, Halleck, Drake, Longfellow, Hoffman, Willis, Mrs. Sigourney, Mrs. Welby, etc. Our country has done her share in this attractive field of pleasure and profit, and no American need be at a loss for materials to refresh or incite his spirit to honorable deeds and high resolves drawn from the writings of the gifted sons and daughters of song throughout the land.

On Criticism and Taste.—Read Burke "On the Sublime and Beautiful," Alison "On Taste," the principles of which were espoused by Stew-

art and Jeffrey; but see Burns's Letters (Lett. CC.). Read the critical articles in the Edinburgh and Quarterly, and especially Lord Jeffrey's Essays. Hallam recommends the papers in Blackwood on Spenser, by Professor Wilson. Read Kames's Criticism. Read Coleridge's criticism on Wordsworth in his "Biographia Literaria." The reviews of Wordsworth. Johnson's "Lives of the Poets;" his criticism on Gray is termed by Mackintosh "a monstrous example of critical injustice;" he adds, "he was unjust to Prior, because he had no feeling of the lively and the graceful." Sir James justly maintained that "there is a poetical sensibility, which in the progress of the mind becomes as distinct a power as a musical ear or a picturesque eye," which sensibility Johnson had not. The author of *Rasselas* certainly had a talent for poetry, and so Sir James himself was "not wanting in imagery," said Robert Hall, "but his was acquired and imported, not native to the mind." The essay in Blackwood on Burns's poetry, by Carlyle, was strongly recommended by Mrs. Hemans. Read also the papers on Milton in the *Spectator*. Lastly, study attentively poems of different degrees of merit; compare odes, blank verse, the different measures of Pope and Spenser, Scott, and others, and consider which are best suited to the English language, what poet

excels in each; then confirm or correct your own opinions by those of reputed critics. I have also known much improvement conveyed by a few hours' reading with an instructor of good taste. Coleridge, high as were his natural endowments, ascribed much of his proficiency to school lessons in criticism from Dr. Bowyer at Christ's Hospital.

I may now conclude with a few works on Natural Philosophy, and Common-place Books.

Herschel's "Preliminary Discourse," Paley's "Natural Theology," and the Bridgewater treatises, will each and all tend to a general knowledge of science. Lardner's treatises will teach *Astronomy, Mechanics, Hydraulics and Hydrostatics, Pneumatics, and Optics*. Mrs. Somerville's "Connection of the Physical Sciences" was written to render science accessible to her countrywomen. Arnot's "Physics" is simple and instructive. On *Botany and the Pleasure Garden*, Mr. Loudon's and Mr. Downing's works give all requisite assistance. On *Chemistry*, consult some elementary work, as Fowne's, or Youmans's, or Draper's, and by all means endeavor to see and understand some experiments. The works of Brande, Turner, Gregory, &c., may then, and not till then, be useful. Lardner on the "Steam-Engine," Brewster on "Magnetism," Hitchcock, or Gray and Adams, or St.

John, on "Geology," and other treatises, simple or technical, elementary or abstruse, can readily be found. Indeed every part of science has of late been treated in a way easy and intelligible to "men, women, and children."

Lastly, keep a Common-place Book. Procure "The Improved Common-place Book on the plan of Locke."* The preface contains instructions. This Common-place Book I would advise students to use as a day-book, and to keep a common ruled book of 300 or 400 pages as a ledger. The day-book should contain an analysis of every book that is read, to aid the natural defects of memory, not to supersede it; that is, we should enter time, place, and persons, and little facts, when, and only when, we can trust our memory with the chief part of the narrative. The entry should resemble the summary we find in books. We may also enter original thoughts in order as they rise. Then the ledger should be a book of topics, in which every subject of interest may have a page or two assigned it, for the purpose of classifying the contents of the Common-place or Day-Book. To show the advantage of this, I will copy from my own book one of the pages in which I have long stored

* Todd's "Index Rerum" has many advantages over the work of Locke.—AM. ED.

up any casual notice and recommendation of authors to determine my choice of reading.

"Authors recommended and characterized."

"Read 'Collingwood's Letter on Trafalgar,' cp. 2 (i. e. Common-place Book, page 2), and Hutchinson 'On Alexandria,' cp. 8. Burke's opinion of Montesquieu, cp. 14, and of Voltaire; of Murphy's Translation and 'Ossian,' cp. 14. The prose of Dryden, Shaftesbury, and Hooker characterized, cp. 27. What Niebuhr and what Pitt considered the desiderata of literature, cp. 175. Gent. Mag. for 1747, about Hogæus. Miss Austin's 'Pride and Prejudice' Scott thought unequalled, cp. 31. Adolphus's Letters to Heber. 'New Monthly' for 1822, about National Gallery. 'On India and Hindoos,' read Ward's book. Swift's letters better than Pope's, cp. 150. Read Cowper's letters, Mackintosh's opinion of 'Hume's History,' cp. 38. Edinb., No. XLI., 2d article by Mackintosh. Canning's eulogy of Chalmers's 'Sermons,' cp. 257. Gray's opinion of Froissart, which was admired by Hemans; as also Paul and Virginia, cp. 54."

I have now said as much as can be useful, and perhaps more, and shall conclude with observing that, however imperfect the present

work may appear to be, any young persons of ordinary understanding, who will follow the advice it contains, for one or two hours a day, will soon acquire such habits of reflection, and so much general knowledge, as will greatly increase the pleasure both of their solitary and their social hours.

THE END.





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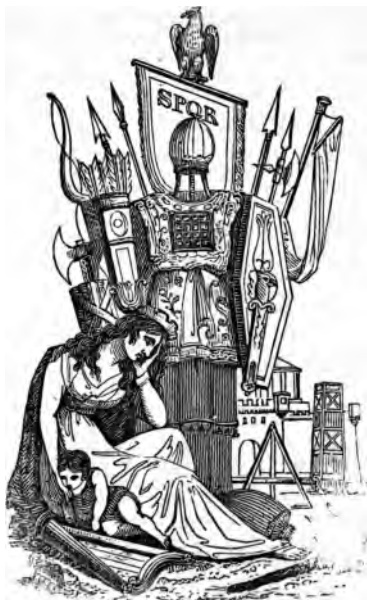
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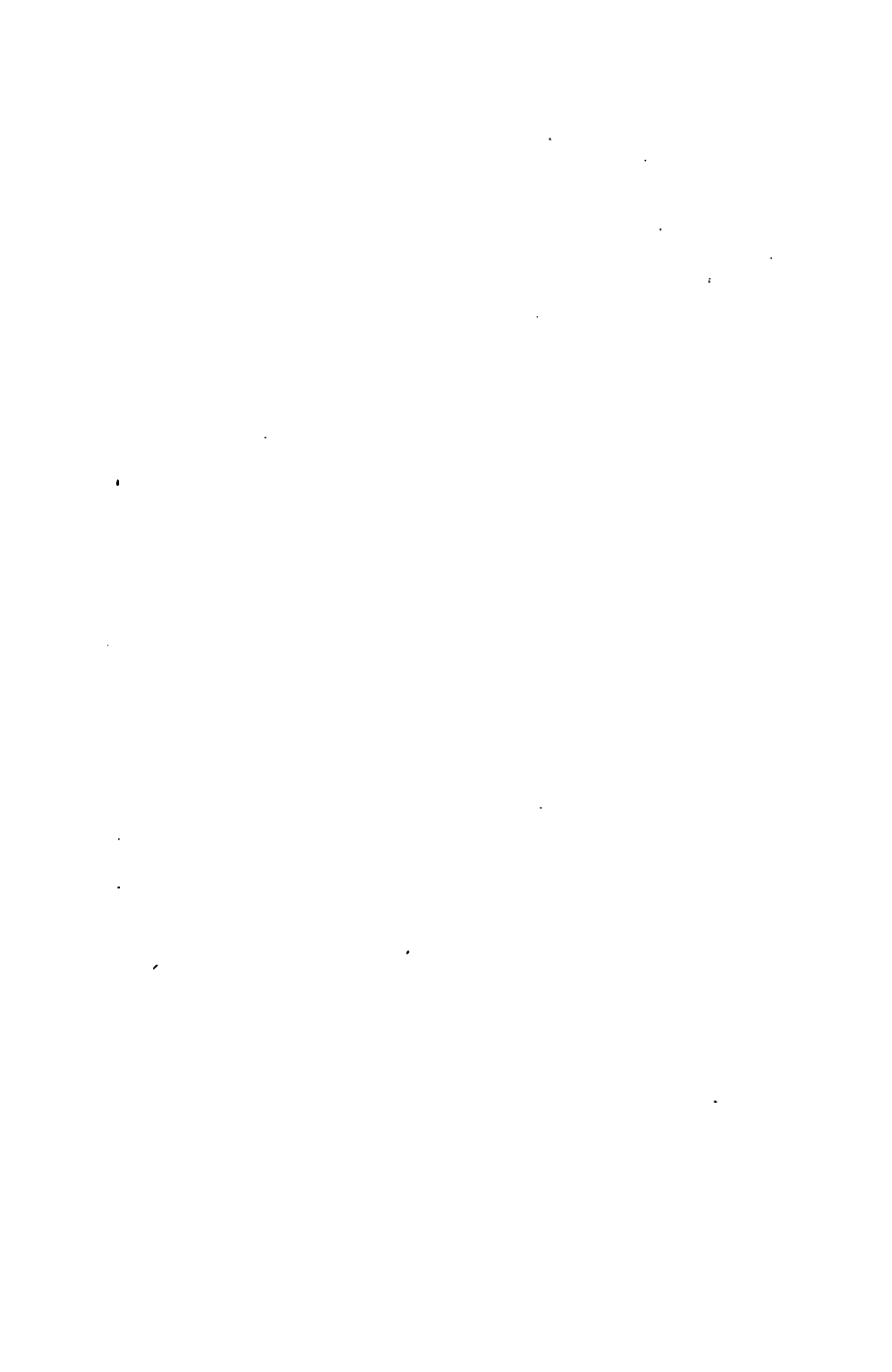
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